

Riverside

VOLUME 2

NUMBER 4

35¢ Quarterly



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35¢ per issue

\$1.25 per year

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RQ Miscellany²³¹

DEDICATION

This issue is dedicated to John W. Campbell, Jr., who is the main subject in two articles. If Orlin Tremaine changed science fiction "from a didactic exercise into a form of art," then Campbell changed it from romance to novel, i.e., into an art form with social content. I do not prefer the type of story emphasised by Mr. Campbell's present magazine, but this in no way reduces indebtedness to him for any science fiction reader.

"NOW HEAR THIS!"

Everyone is urged to register at once for the 1967 science-fiction convention to be held in New York city, September 1-4. A \$3 registration fee paid now entitles you to the usual convention privileges (e.g., reduced room rates) plus progress reports and a program book mailed in advance. Send cash or inquiries to Nycon 3, Box 367, Gracie Square Sta., New York 10028.

"RADIOHERO"

Old Time Radio fans can anticipate Jim Harmon's book, The Great Radio Heroes, scheduled for publication by Doubleday in September (price still undetermined). Besides lengthy discussions of s.f. and fantasy programs like "Inner Sanctum," "Hermit's Cave," "Buck Rogers," and "Captain Midnight" there will be full chapters on "I Love a Mystery," "Jack Armstrong," and "Tom Mix," all of which (including the last) were part fantasy. Also discussed are non-fantasy programs like "Gangbusters" and "One Man's Family."

"WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU..."

Starting next issue (number nine), RQ's price will be 50¢ per copy and \$1.50 per subscription (four issues). Until they expire, old subscriptions will be honoured at the old rates, as will renewals which precede issue Nine.

PHILATELIC PRIZES

Verse in future issues will be entirely the choice of Poetry Editor, Jim Sallis; this time exactly half the selections were his--and any reader who can identify which half will win a miniature coloured engraving of Queen Elizabeth II.

THE RQ RECOMMENDS...

Those who recall the British Fantasy Review of the late '40's will be happy to learn of two new comparable magazines, John Bangsund's Australian S.F. Review (19 Gladstone Ave., Northcote N.16, Melbourne; \$3.60 or 1/7/6 for 12 issues) and the Quarber Merkur of Franz Rottensteiner (2761 Ortmann, Quarb 38, Austria). (But QM readers must review their college German, since Franz's magazine has no English language edition.) Only editors can receive QM directly, since Franz accepts only "exchanges"; but money can be sent to Dieter Braeg (Invalidenstr. 5, c/o Bayer, Lloyd Post. 151, Vienna-3), whose Mutant (co-edited by Conrad Shaef; \$1.50/4 issues) includes the verbatim contents of QM. ASFR and QM do not yet display the wit and acridity of the old FR; but they are the best substitutes now available.

(continued on page 314)

Superman and the System

Part I

W.H.G. ARMYTAGE

#1 -- THE NIETZSCHEAN GOSPEL

"I class with George Griffith as a purveyor of world 'pseudo scientific extravaganza' " complained H. G. Wells to Arnold Bennet in 1902.¹ "There's a quality in the worst of my so called 'pseudo-scientific' (imbecile adjective) stuff that the American does not master which differentiates it from Jules Verne, e.g. just as Swift is differentiated from fantasia -- isn't there? There is something other than either story writing or artistry merit which has emerged through the series of my books, something one might regard as a new system of ideas."

This "new system of ideas" Wells considered was to be found "in Anticipations especially chapter 15 and it's in my Royal Institution Lecture, and it's also in The First Men in the Moon and The Invisible Man and Chaffery's chapter in Love and Mr. L."

The "new system" was operational or, as Wells called it, kinetic utopianism and it owed as much to Nietzsche as to Darwin. The process of evolution, argued Nietzsche, would, if left to itself, only lead to the "last man," a complacent, conformist, uncreative hedonist. From such a fate mankind could be rescued by overmen. Overmen overcame themselves and, therefore, led others. Only frustration of this will to become perfect (i.e., an overman) led to the base desire to seek power over others.

Nietzsche challenged Christianity not in Butlerian terms, but as ministering to weakness. It was "the revolt of failures"; the antithesis to the Übermensch, or drive to achieve a higher and more powerful state of being. To perfect himself, recreate himself, become an "overman," man had to acquire God-like qualities. This will to power (like the elan vital of Bergson or the libido of Jung), had to establish valves around Reason and Eros.

Nietzsche saw contemporary man on the broken icefloes of the middle ages and forecast that the twentieth century would be the classic age of war, ending with the emergence of overman, served by a slave class. To avoid the inertia of China and the cash-nexus (a Carlylean overtone) of America, Europe would unite.

"Remain faithful to the earth, and do not believe those who speak to you of other-worldly hopes," he cried in the prologue to Thus Spake Zarathustra (1883-4). A messiah, not so much of a religion as an anti-religion,³ he gave to the world what he thought was a fifth gospel in the long unfinished series of allegorical images. It begins with Zarathustra--the Iranian name of a Persian prophet whom the Greeks knew as Zoroaster--going up into a mountain and staying for ten years. Emerging to the market place he finds a tightrope-walker (mankind) walking on a rope, from which he is knocked off by a fool (a nineteenth century intellectual) and killed. The fool then advises Zarathustra to leave town. This he does, dragging with him the corpse, which he stows in a tree.

Zarathustra now decides to appeal only to the few select. In the third part of the allegory, he surveys the city (symbolising society) and presages it must be destroyed by fire. Then, he assembles men possessing elements of supermen in his cave to tell them "we do not in the least wish for the Kingdom of Heaven. We have become men. Therefore it is the Kingdom of Earth we wish for."⁴

Nietzsche's views became a bible to those depressed by scientific advance, by the elevation of mediocrity, and by the democratic doctrine of progress. They were summed up in another work four years later, entitled Gotzen-Dämmerung (The Twilight of the Idols), with its characteristic subtitle Wie man mit dem Hammer Philosophirt (How One Philosophises with a Hammer).

English ears, attuned to Thomas Carlyle's conviction that "All history is an imprisoned Epic, nay, an imprisoned Psalm or Prophecy,"⁵ and to his apostrophe, "Millennium of Anarchies;--abridge it, spend your heart's blood upon abridging it, ye Heroic Wise that are to come" (*ibid.*, xxi), received Nietzsche's prophetic message loud and clear. So did German ones.

#2 -- SOME GERMAN APOSTLES



That religion could no longer motivate social improvement was the constant refrain of Kurd Lasswitz, pupil and biographer of the physicist-psychologist Georg Fechner. Kurd Lasswitz saw that it had been replaced by the power of man over nature, "the conviction of the possibility of theoretically understanding and technically controlling nature. Modern man attained maturity with the growth of the natural sciences." He also regarded an ideal future State as a chivalastic vestige, and revolution as an inadequate substitute for the exercise of reason

and hard work. Only technological progress could "idealise" society by lightening the burden of maintaining life and diffusing ethics and aesthetics to ever-widening circles. From Bilder aus der Zukunft (1878) to Sternendau: Die Planze vom Neptusmond (1909), Lasswitz published a number of optimistic fantasies of the future. One of the stories in Bilder aus der Zukunft is set in the year 2371 and visualises the city standing on pillars with farms beneath and gardens above; a poet (Magnet) and a scientist (Oxygen) quarrel over a girl player of the "perfume piano," which exudes odours to correspond with its music. Against Oxygen's view that ultimately all the arts will be abolished, Magnet believes that the elemental forces of the will will prevail. Their quarrel leads to the death of the pianist and the escape of the scientist to the planets.

Another story in the same book is set in the year 3877 when moods and feelings can be transmitted by a psycho-kinetic motor. Another scientist also in love with a musician finds that a mathematical formula prevents their union. The villain, Atom, looks to a time when various attributes will be discharged by various types of human beings.

Auf zwei Planeten (1897) visualises the Martians visiting the earth in space-ships, bringing news of their world, where solar energy, moving roads, natural parks and artificial foods the cinema and radio are common and everyone has to read five newspapers of opposing views. To the Martians the earth appears to be "several hundred thousand years back" in history, still drawing its energy from the plant kingdom, and consider it their "solemn duty to bring to humans the blessings of our culture"--an anticipatory echo of German aspirations to come.

Journalists caught the cue. The fifty year old editor of Die Gesellschaft, Michael Georg Conrad, wrote a thirtieth century frolic, Im purpurner Finsternis: Roman-Improvisation aus dem dreissigsten Jahrhundert (1895), where the population live underground and are fed by pellets (Surros). This show Teuta (a totally mechanised society) and Nordica (an idyllic pastoral-type society).

The real hero is Grege, a Nietzschean superman in conflict with Teuta. Grege, as being concerned in, rather than observing, society, is here an innovation. Though "free-enterprise" Nordica is preferred to "socialist" Teuta, Grege turns to the girl Hela, a seer and dancer (a mixture of dark and light), as representing the true way, and rejects Nordica because man has reached happiness there "too early." The author is interested in the superman potential of man, seeing Nietzsche as the answer to the threat of automation.

Extrapolations were the subject of Carl Grunert's Im Irdischen Jenseits (1908) and Martin Atlas's De Befreiung (1910). The latter tells of a simple power state, Peron, in the middle of the ocean, whose inhabitants enjoy unlimited inanimate power, which enables them to enjoy radio (Fial), cinemas (Pial), telekenesis (Kial), and unlimited powers of reproducing anything (Rial). Peron becomes a world power under a President with the motto Scientia redemptor mundi. This redemption is accompanied by complete democracy, thanks to each being able to appreciate, through Kial, each other's opinions on every question. Eugenics and birth control, together with availability of new inventions, wipe out sexual and social inequalities. Even racial differences are removed by blanching Negroes and Asiatics.

"Der Weltseele wollen wir näher sein," exclaimed Paul Scheerbarth as he opposed that cosmic feeling which foresees the future in Na Prost! (1898), Die Wilde Jagd (1901), Kometentanz (1903), and Perpetuum Mobile (1910). For him, Nietzsche was "the God of Journalists" whose futuristic forays were objectionable. More perceptive evaluations of these mechanistic tomorrows came from the scientists. Bernhard Kellerman, product of the Munich technische Hochschule, wrote an anti-mechanistic fantasy, Der Tunnel (1913), showing its collapse at the virtual moment of achievement and the killing of thousands. Kellerman shows man changed by the machine without losing the reader's sympathy. His experiencing subject, MacAllan, is a new type of man who sacrifices all that the bourgeois world holds dear for his technical project, and suffers the loss of his sensitive, art-loving wife, and the madness of his friend, also a famous architect. He makes a "realpolitikal" marriage with a financier's daughter. The author, by showing that the technical achievement will be superseded, indicated he had no love of technological achievement for its own sake.

The great electrical manufacturer and statesman Walter Rathenau in Von Kommended Dingen (1917) explored more clearly misgivings articulated by Oswald Spengler in Der Mensch und die Technik (1931). Other dark intimations, like Georg Kaiser's Gas I (1918), and Gas II (1920), and the more futuristic Theo von Harton's Metropolis (1926) lead up to Alfred Doblin's Giganten (1932), the only German example of "kinetic Utopia." This presents a panorama of the biological evolution of man at the centre, rather than a picture of self-contained society. It covers three centuries of a third millennial world, whose technology has become arcane, owing to the strength of the opponents of machine-culture. Political and psychological unrest lead to a war with the primitive Easterners and indecisive world war.

This historical section of the novel deals with control of man by man, the relationship of technological man to nature, and concludes that man cannot escape Nature because of his own nature. Technology won't help of itself: adventure is the driving force of history.

The second part deals with the subsequent de-icing of Greenland, through volcanic energy transported from Iceland. As a result it becomes menacingly over-luxuriant in flora and fauna. Volunteers expose themselves to volcanic rays, become giants, but keep the menace at bay. The scientists do the same to themselves, becoming giants--individuals above society--and get less and less human. The conquerors of Greenland return, form a new society with the opponents of machine-culture, and insist on the importance of the law.⁷

#3 -- H.G. WELLS: PROPHET OF EVOLUTION



But the most assiduous architect of "kinetic utopias" was H.G. Wells for whom the projection of evolution was a constant occupation. His The Time Machine (1895)--a virtual re-writing of The Chronic Argonaut--offered a Darwinian-Marxist picture of the year 802701: Marxist in that the pleasant relaxed society of the Eloi was communistic; Darwinian in that the species had been considerably modified by the environment. Another Marxist touch, too, appears in the Morlocks, a dark, hard-working, machine-

-making underground race, so like Victorian north England mining classes, on whom the playful Eloi apparently depend. "Apparently" is important, for Wells as if to show Marx wrong reveals that the Eloi are merely cattle on which the Morlocks feed. But Darwin has the last word when both Eloi and Morlock disappear before a race of giant crabs. These crabs, in turn, disappear after the year 3,000,000 A.D., leaving the planet to livid green liverworts, lichens and ice, and, ultimately to total darkness.⁸

From now on Wells exploited every literary device of the Utopians, the extravagant and the fantastic. He took the classic Utopian situation, shipwreck on an island, to examine bestiality of man in Island of Dr. Moreau (1896). Here, on a seven square mile pacific island, Dr. Moreau, a former London vivisector, has made some sixty or so Beast Men or Women. These caricatures of humanity have one friend in Moreau's drunken assistant, Montgomery. But Montgomery can't prevent Moreau being ravaged and killed by a puma he is trying to transform, nor can he prevent being murdered himself.

For the Beast Men revert as soon as they taste blood. The narrator, a young naturalist called Edward Prendick, who was shipwrecked on the island, finds himself fighting for life against them and using both whip and gun before he eventually escapes.

"I could not persuade myself," he concludes after returning to civilisation, "that the men and women I met were not also another, partially human, Beast People, animals half wrought into the outward image of human souls, and that they would presently begin to revert, to show first this bestial mark and then that." Even the preacher in the chapel seemed to "gabber Big Thinks even as the Ape Man had done."

He was the Gulliver of Space. His aptly-timed and aptly-titled The First Men in the Moon (1901) virtually inaugurated interplanetary science-fiction, since Dr. Cavor, thanks to his discovery of a new propellant, reaches the moon and finds the Selenite race of specialists. Each is a perfect unit in a world machine: aristocracy with big heads: administrators (responsible for a certain cubic content of the moon's bulk), experts (who were trained to perform certain operations), and the erudite (the repositories of all knowledge). Since the heads of the last had to serve as libraries and records, "much as the honey ants of Texas store honey in their distended abdomens," these erudite ones "were led about by little watchers and attendants; some of them being altogether too great for locomotion" and were "carried about from place to place in a sort of sedan tub, wabbling jellies of knowledge." (chapter 24)

Cavor describes the making of these specialists:

I came upon a number of young Selenites confined in jars from which only the fore-limbs protruded, who were being compressed to become machine-minders of a special sort. The extended "hand" in this highly developed system of technical education is stimulated by irritants and nourished by injection, while the rest of the body is starved.

And he reflects:

That wretched looking hand-tentacle sticking out of its jar seemed to have a sort of limp appeal for lost possibilities; it haunts me still, although, of course, it is really in the end a far more humane proceeding than our earthly method of leaving children to grow into human beings and then making machines of them.

The Grand Lunar disliked what Cavor told him of earth men; their aggressiveness and proclivities for war. So when Cavor admitted that upon himself alone hung the possibility of further men reaching the moon, that was enough. Cavor disappeared forever.

Remembering how Cavor met his end on the moon, a later fictional space traveller, Dr. Ransom in C.S. Lewis's Out of the Silent Planet (1938) felt "shy."⁹ Well he might, for whereas Cavor was in a scientific Utopia, Dr. Ransom was in a Heaven above, peopled by eldils (angels) and rational animals.

Wells betrays the sources of his inspiration in the arguments of Willie with his mother's lodger-curate In the Days of the Comet (1906):

I used the names of Karl Marx and Engels as biblical exegetes with no little effect. I was moved to denounce Christianity as the ethic of slaves, and declare myself a disciple of a German writer of no little vogue in those days named Nietzsche.

Willie's letters to his girl-friend Nettie "broke out towards theology, sociology and the cosmos." His mind "ran persistently" one evening "upon revolutions after the last French pattern" and he "sat on a Committee of Safety and tried back-sliders." Arguments with his friend Parland about the relative merits of science and socialism led him to believe that they were "an impossible opposition." He is jilted and his premediated murder of the faithless Nettie is arrested by a great cosmic Advent--the brushing of the earth by a comet. Thereafter everything changed; not only for Willie but for the whole earth:

The former revivals spent themselves; but the Great Revival did not spend itself, but grew to be, for the majority of Christendom at least, the permanent expression of the Change. For many it has taken the shape of an outright declaration that this was the Second Advent--it is not for me to discuss the validity of the suggestion, for nearly all it has accounted to an enduring broadening of the issues of life...

That "broadening" was the Great Change, when the world began anew, following the "green vapours" exhaled by the comet. Willie reminisces:

As I look back into the past, I see a vast exultant dust of house-breaking and removal rise up into the clear air that followed the hour of the green vapours, I live again the Year of Tents, the Year of Scaffolding, and like the triumph of a new theme in a piece of music--the great cities of our new days arise. Come Cuerlyon and Armedon, the twin cities of lower England, with the winding summer city of Thames between... I see the great cities America has planned and made; the Golden City, with ever ripening fruit along its broad warm ways, and the bell-glad City of a Thousand Spires. I see again as I have seen, the city of the theatres and meeting-places, the City of the Sunlight Bright, and the new city that is still called Utah; and dominated by its observatory dome and the plain dignified lines of the university facade upon the cliff, Martenabar, the great white winter city of the Upland Snows.

With new cities came new books. The old "dropsy of the nation's mind" was burnt:



"It seemed to me," said Willie, "that when we gathered those books and papers together...we gathered warped and crippled ideas and contagious base suggestions, the formulae of dull tolerances and stupid impatiences, the mean defensive ingenuities of sluggish habits of thinking and timid indolent evasions. There was more than a touch of malignant satisfaction for me in helping to gather it all together."

There was much of Macaulay's *Ebenezers* and *Bethels* about the city itself:

He put down his hand, and quite noiselessly the great window widened down to us, and the splendid nearer prospect of that dreamland city was before me. There for one clear moment I saw it; its galleries and open spaces, its trees of golden fruit and crystal waters, its music and rejoicing, love and beauty without ceaseless flowing through its varied and intricate streets. (Epilogue)

This quasi-religious appeal of Wells was sensed by his contemporaries. Bernard Shaw said he "effected a conversion and a conviction of sin comparable to the most sensational feats of General Booth or Gypsy Smith." As a result, Clara in Shaw's *Pygmalion* (1912), found that Wellsians were:

People she had thought deeply religious, and had tried to conciliate on that tack with disastrous results.

But when she began to talk about Wells they "suddenly took an interest in her, and revealed a hostility to conventional religion which she has never conceived possible except amongst the most desperate characters" (Conclusion). After meeting Wells, she talked of nothing for "weeks and weeks afterwards."

Like the pulpit orators of Macaulay's time Wells began to preach rather than write. His lay sermon (or his "thirty nine articles," as the *New York Herald* (15 April 1906) perceptively called it) was given to the world as *Anticipations of the Reaction of Mechanical and Scientific Progress upon Human Life and Thought* (1902). In this he envisaged an elite consisting of scientists, engineers, and physicians "controlling and restricting very greatly the ...non functional masses." He tried to convert the Fabians to the idea of scientifically classifying the temperament of all citizens to determine their function in society and putting them under a ruling elite of scientists--the "Samurai"--composed of those who had proved themselves by a series of difficult examinations. "To talk a little of the upper slopes of the mountain we think we are climbing would but the trees let us see it."

He wrote A Modern Utopia (1905) ostensibly telling a mere story of personal adventures among Utopian philosophies; he was realistic enough to acknowledge that the Thing in Being would not be silenced by the miraculous aggregation of the Samurai:

"Things do not happen like that," he confessed, "God is not simple, God is not theatrical, the summons comes to each man in its due time for him, with an infinite subtlety and variety...First here, then there, single men and then groups of men will fall into line--not indeed with my poor faulty hesitating suggestions, but with a great and comprehensive plan wrought out by many minds and in many tongues." (p.327)

Yet at the same time he believed quite firmly that:

An inductive knowledge of a great number of things in the future is becoming a human possibility. I believe that the time is drawing near when it will be possible to suggest a systematic exploration of the future...So far no first class mind has ever focussed itself upon these issues...

("The Discovery of the Future" (1901), Works IV, 374.)

It was with this in view that he was later to undertake his own survey of world history:

I believe that the deliberate direction of historical study and of economic and social study towards the future, and an increasing reference, a deliberate and courageous reference, to the future in moral and religious discussion would be enormously stimulating and enormously profitable to our intellectual life...such an enterprise is now a serious and profitable undertaking.

(ibid., 380)

Indeed, he considered:

It is our ignorance of the future and our persuasion that that ignorance is absolutely incurable that alone gives the past its enormous predominance in our thoughts.

That future, however, lay in the hands of the scientists:

As a matter of fact prophecy has always been inseparably connected with the idea of scientific research... Until a scientific theory yields confident forecasts you know it is unsound and tentative.

How far may we hope to get trustworthy inductions about the future of man...We are inclined to underrate our chances of certainties in the future just as I think we are inclined to be too credulous about the historical past...An increase in the number of human beings considered may positively simplify the case instead of complicating it; that as the individuals increase in number they begin to average out.

(ibid., 377)

Or, as he was to say later:

A Utopia is the first sketch plan of a prepared replacement or change in human institutions...a vision of the being required...Every Utopia is a treason to the thing that is...a slight to the people who are. 10

He took his stand beside the great Utopians of the past whose "essential value," he wrote, lay in their "power to resist the causation of" the past, and to evade, initiate, endeavour and overcome."¹¹ This is why he left novel writing to turn to sociological tracts: "cet horrible cafouillis que l'on appelle sociologie."¹²

#4 -- WELLS'S QUALIFICATIONS ON RATIONALITY

Far from supplying open warrants for technocrats to take over society Wells drafted a number of restrictive clauses designed to bring the reader to a full realisation of the implication of the story. Thus the inhuman control of function in the lunar society endorsed by Dr. Cavor in The First Men in the Moon shows that all vestiges of morality and ethics have been dissolved in selenite rationality. So, too, the super state of the year 3002 with its flying machines, television, public address systems, and roofed-in cities in When the Sleeper Wakes (1899) is based on a deluded and controlled population, as Ostrog, its controller frankly acknowledges:

"You feel moved against our pleasure cities...the excretory organs of the State, attractive places that year after year draw all that is weak and vicious, all that is lascivious and lazy, all the easy roguerie of the world, to a graceful destruction. They go there, they have their time, they die childless, and mankind is the better...Suppose that these swarming yelping fools...get the upper hand of us, what then? They will only fall to other masters...Let them revolt, let them win, and kill me and my like. Others will arise--other masters. The end will be the same."

The type of these restrictive clauses blurred after 1901. This was due, suggests his son, to the combined influence of the Fabians and William James. For James's principle of operative truth whereby "ideas (which are themselves but parts of our experience), become true just in so far as they help us to get into satisfactory relations with other parts of our experience," and that "true ideas are those we can assimilate, validate, corroborate and verify" lead inexorably to the view that the true is only the expedient.¹³

Blur though they might, as Wells tried to persuade himself and others that nature could be improved, yet these restrictive clauses persistently appeared in bold type, overprinted by those who felt it incumbent to circumscribe the freedom of movement he accorded to the human spirit.

These overprinters, or meccanophobes, amongst whom were G.K. Chesterton, Rudyard Kipling, and E.M. Forster, were responsible for "Wellsian" becoming a quasi-pejorative adjective.

(to be continued)

FOOTNOTES

1) Harris Wilson (ed.), Arnold Bennett and H. G. Wells (1960), 73-4.

2) Eric Bentley, The Cult of the Superman (London, 1947), 131, 88.

3) Nietzsche wrote to his sister in December 1888: "You have not the slightest idea what it means to be next-of-kin to the man and destiny in whom the question of epochs has been settled. Quite literally speaking: I hold the future of mankind in the palm of my hand."

4) Nietzsche's sister moved to Paraguay with her husband Bernard Forster where they founded a Colony: Nueva Germania.

5) Thomas Carlyle, The History of Friedrich II of Prussia called Frederick the Great (1885), I, I, iii.

6) Edwin M.J. Kretzmann, "German Technological Utopias of the Pre-War Period," Annals of Science III (1938), 417-430.

7) Hans-Jungen Krysmanski, Die utopische Methode Eine literatur-und wissenssoziologische Untersuchung deutscher utopischer Romane des 20 Jahrhunderts (Köln 1963), 31-74.

8) Bernard Bergonzi, The Early H.G. Wells. A Study of the Scientific Romances (Manchester, 1961), 1-61, gives a good account of the genesis of these stories in the fin de siècle atmosphere of the time. Bergonzi suggests (pp. 47-8) that the Eloi of The Time Machine with their overtones of elfin, eloiné, elite and eld (aged), were in fact a decadent race. Their buildings were ruinous, they spent all their time in playing gently, in bathing in the river, in making love in half-playful fashion, in eating fruit, and sleeping.

9) Out of the Silent Planet (Pan Edition, 1962), 81-2.

10) "An Apology for a World Utopia" in F.S. Marvin (ed.), The Evolution of World Peace (Oxford, 1921), 159, 160.

11) A Modern Utopia, 10.

12) R.M. Alberes, L'Aventure Intellectuelle du XXe siècle. Panorama des Litteratures Europeennes 1900-1959. (Editors Albin Michel, 22, Rue Huyghens, Paris.)

13) Anthony West, "H.G. Wells," Encounter (February, 1957).

CONSUBSTANTIAL

Where the O'Byrnes and Byrnes are buried...I

Closing the book with fingers unaware
 Stand in the cloistral hush of Glenmalure.
 Trim polished stones where grim Land Leaguers lie;
 Older and cruder stones in poor repair;
 Tombs built by bereaved clansmen to endure
 Forever--beneath, those warrior chiefs who fell
 Defending Wicklow glens against the Gall;
 And, bodied for an instant from the dust,
 Proud cairns, tumuli, and for sentinel
 Stones with deep chiselled Ogham names.

I call!

What though the speech be foreign, come they must:
 Great bodied men with curling beards--their gaze
 Dreamy and wide, or fierce as waves in storm;
 Tall slender girls, stone pale, with dark long hair,
 Slim gentle fingers wise in woman ways...

A moment only, yet an age, they form
 Before me, all the shadowy hosts who were
 Guardians of the flame that life be mine.
 Through loins of townbred men the lightning ran
 From those who strove with earth for fire and food.
 Their fathers harried Sassenach for kine,
 Held tribal land and law despite all ban.

Beyond loom mightier figures, high of mood:
 Hunters and warriors more than mortal-souled,
 Lovers who won their brides among the Sidhe,
 Maids who wived kings from Underwave; and high,
 Shadowing all, beings of brightness--cold,
 Vast shapes immutable in deity:

Where the O'Byrnes and Byrnes are buried--I!

--Pádraig Ó Broin

CREIDE'S LAMENT FOR CAEL

Editor's note--

This poem is taken from the twelfth-century Gaelic. Mr. O Broin's translation should be compared with that made (from another text) by Gerard Murphy for Early Irish Lyrics (Oxford, 1956), which is quoted immediately below.

The haven roars over the fierce stream of Reenverc:
the drowning of the warrior from Loch Da Chonn is what
the wave striking the shore laments.

A heron calls loudly in the marsh of Druim Da Thren;
she is unable to protect her live ones--
a two-coloured fox is on the track of her birds.

Sad is the cry the thrush makes in Drumkeen;
and no less sad is the note of the blackbird in Leitir Léig.

Sad is the sound made by the stag in Drumlesh:
dead is the doe of Druim Síleinn;
a mighty stag roars now that she has gone.

Grievous to me has been the death of the warrior
who used to lie with me--that the son of the woman from
Daire Da Dos should have a cross above his head.

It is grievous to me that Cael should be as one dead by my side,
and that a wave should have swept over his fair body:
the greatness of his beauties set my wits astray.

Sad is the cry made by the shore's wave upon the beach;
since it has drowned a fine noble man it is grievous to me
that Cael ever went near it.

Sad is the sound made by the wave on the northern shore,
rioting around a great rock, lamenting Cael since he died.

Sad is the strife waged by the wave against the southern shore;
as for me my life has reached its term, and by reason of it
my appearance (as is clear to all) has suffered.

Strange music is made by the heavy wave of Tulach Léis;
as for me my wealth does not exist since it has boasted to me
of the tale which its roar has borne to me.

Since the son of Crimthan has been drowned no one I may love
exists after him; many chieftains fell by his hand;
his shield never cried out in a day of stress.

CREIDE'S LAMENT FOR CAEL

The bay resounds

from the surging flood of Rinndavarc:
that he from the Lake of Two Hounds drowned
reason that wave berates the strand.

The heron screams

from Drumdahrane across the fen:
she begrudges not her life
and the fox intent upon her nestlings.

Mournful the cry

the thrush is crying on Drumkeen:
Not more cheerful the note
the blackbird flutes in Letterlee.

Mournful the roar

the stag roars in Drumalesh;
dead the hind of Drum Shileann;
the constant stag bells for her yet.

Death to me

that he that lay with me is dead:
son of her from Derrydadoss
to be with boards above his head.

All ends for me

that dead beside me Cael should be.
That tides should cover his bright side
maddens me, so powerful he.

Mournful the roar

the sea wave makes against the beach,
that comely noble warrior drowned:
anguish to me Cael dared their reach.

CREIDE'S LAMENT FOR CAEL

Mournful the boom
the wave makes on the northern shore
pounding against indifferent rocks,
keening Cael who comes no more.

Mournful the war
waves wage against the southern coast.
For myself, my days are done--
witness ravaged face alone.

Discordant drums
the heavy wave of Tulcalesh:
now no good is good, and I
broken by that it now laments.

MacCrifan drowned:
none lives worth love, that warrior gone.
Many fighters fell by his hand,
in danger's day his shield roared not.

--Pádraig Ó Broin

PARAPSYCHOLOGY

Fact or Fraud?

by Raymond T. BIRGE

(Editor's note: Dr. Birge is former chairman of the Physics department at the University of California (Berkeley); what follows is a condensed version of a talk that he gave at Marietta College, Ohio, on October 24th, 1961.)

Let me begin by stating that the most essential characteristic of any really successful scientist is his ability to distinguish, in science, between what is worth investigating and what is not; between what avenues are likely to lead to new and important scientific discoveries, and what are merely blind alleys, which can and sometimes do consume a life-time of futile effort. The really great scientists have, without exception, possessed this characteristic to a superlative degree. I mention this matter because today we are concerned with one of the blind alleys.

When I arrived in Marietta on September 20th, I read in the paper that Dr. J. B. Rhine was to speak before the Advertising Club of Marietta on October 11th.

Now if anyone wishes to discover Dr. Rhine's actual standing in the scientific world, he need only inquire at the Psychology department of any educational institution, including Marietta College. Although Dr. Rhine claims that parapsychology is an advanced form of psychology, he is not, himself, a psychologist. He holds a Ph.D. degree in Botany from the University of Chicago. He is now Director of the Parapsychology Laboratory, situated at Duke University, but deriving its financial support wholly from outside funds. He is not a member of the faculty of Duke University.

Surveys that have been made in the past show that very few professional psychologists hold any belief whatever in the reality of psychic phenomena of any kind. But a majority of such persons considered it worthy of serious study. Well, any seemingly mysterious phenomenon is worthy of serious study, but there are special and valid reasons why the average legitimate scientist shuns the field of parapsychology as though it were the plague.

Possibly I can make the reasons clear by quoting from a very recent article by the British astronomer, C.C.L. Gregory (University of London), who writes that for over thirty years he has had rather intimate contact with the believers in psychic phenomena. His article appears in the British periodical Cosmos.

As regards parapsychology as a whole, very large sums of money are involved, and so are reputations and publications. Evasion tactics, misrepresentation, the disappearance of inconvenient or incriminating letters and documents, the suppression of critical opinions... the organized suppression of the work of those liable to voice damaging views and their discrediting on other grounds such as systematic aspersions cast on their sanity, whispering campaigns, criminal accusations, the unlimited and carefully organized abuse of hospitality and the employment for such purposes of experienced experts--all these are the standard hazards that face the scientist who seriously ventures into the field of the "paranormal." Only dedicated men should heed the perennial siren song of parapsychologists, "If only scientists, instead of being wilfully blind, would give their attention to the data of parapsychology..."

I can fully endorse these remarks and I would like to add one of my own. Anyone, no matter how ignorant or uncritical, can apparently get a book published, favourable to a belief in psychic phenomena, and the more sensational it is the better. But if one writes a serious book, challenging such beliefs, it is almost impossible to find a publisher! Publishers are well aware that the general public is far more interested in a blood-curdling ghost story than in any serious, scientific exposure of a fraud.

Parapsychology is indeed a remarkable field. Let me mention three of its aspects:

(1) Believers in psychic phenomena, including telepathy, insist that such things have nothing to do with magic, and wax indignant if one merely mentions the word. But let me quote from the authoritative classic by Sir James George Frazer, The Golden Bough--A Study in Magic and Religion.

This belief in the sympathetic influence on each other by persons or things at a distance is of the very essence of magic. Whatever doubts science may entertain as to the possibility of action at a distance, magic has none; faith in telepathy is one of its first principles. A modern advocate of the influence of mind upon mind at a distance would have no difficulty in convincing a savage; the savage believed in it long ago, and what is more, he acted on his belief with a logical consistency such as his brother in the faith has not yet, so far as I am aware, exhibited in his conduct.

(page 22, abridged edition)

(2) Another and most important aspect is the claimed inhibitory effect that any pronounced sceptic has on the success of a psychic experiment. Thus, in the card-guessing experiments, so extensively publicized by Rhine, beginning in the early nineteen thirties, the mere presence of a sceptic in the room where the experiments are underway effectively prevents the percipient (he is the one who has the claimed psychic power) from exercising this power; and that is just the excuse offered by parapsychologists when legitimate scientists attempt to verify psychic claims (and a number of such attempts have been made), and invariably obtain only the results predicted by pure chance. To get significantly above-chance results, parapsychologists state, everyone concerned in the affair must have a sincere and child-like faith in the reality of psychic phenomena. Is it therefore any wonder that legitimate scientists consider it a waste of time to engage in such work, when even the believers admit in advance that sceptics will obtain merely the purely chance results calculated by standard statistics?

(3) Probably the most important aspect of all is this: the field of parapsychology is saturated with fraud! This fact is freely admitted by prominent workers in the field. Thus, Harry Price in his book, Fifty Years of Psychical Research--A Critical Survey, writes "...fully 98 percent of the phenomena, both mental and physical, are fraudulently produced." Thus the only logical question left for discussion is: are all psychic phenomena fraudulent, or is there some microscopic remaining fraction that is genuine?

Of course, "fraudulent" is too restrictive a term. In the case of many reported events there is no fraud, either conscious or unconscious. The event may be merely incorrectly reported. Or the event may be purely an illusion, or, most important of all, it may be easily explained in a rational manner. Later on I will give one or more illustrations of each of these three possibilities.

Now orthodox scientists, especially physical scientists, are not accustomed to dealing with either fraud or illusions, and they are not well equipped to handle such phenomena. In fact, it has been said that a professional magician can fool the average scientist even more easily than he can the general public. Moreover, if any scientist were discovered to have been deliberately fraudulent in say five percent of his professional work, his reputation would be utterly ruined, and thereafter no one would trust anything he might do. Yet the ablest and most famous mediums, such as Eusapia Palladino, can be admittedly fraudulent, say ninety five percent of the time, and still the great host of believers in psychic phenomena (and the host is larger than you may suspect) insist that the remaining five percent of the time her "manifestations" cannot be explained in any rational manner, in other words, that they must be psychic.

This is the weird sort of reasoning that it seems impossible to refute. No matter how extensive is the evidence of fraud, the true "believer," when cornered merely replies, "well, we will admit it, but then there still remains this and that phenomenon, which is certainly genuine." And obviously one cannot investigate and prove fraudulent everything.

The field of parapsychology is a very extensive one. Its main divisions possibly may be classified as follows:

- 1) Mediums, mental and physical,
- 2) Ghosts, Poltergeists, Haunted Houses, etc.,
- 3) Hallucinations and Apparitions,
- 4) Divination (including dowsing and water divining),
- 5) Psychokinesis (PK phenomena); the influence of the mind on a physical event, such as the throw of dice,
- 6) Claimed psychic ability in animals, birds, fish, and insects,
- 7) Spontaneous Cases,
- 8) Telepathy and Clairvoyance, especially as displayed in card-guessing experiments -- what Rhine calls extra-sensory perception (ESP).



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I will try now for lack of time to dispose of most of the eight fields with a few sentences each.

1) Mediums, mental and physical

The original mediums were the Fox Sisters, who in 1848 started the entire profession of mediumship and what is known as "Modern Spiritualism." Forty years later they confessed that it was all a fraud. But from 1848 on, for the next few decades, there were literally thousands of mediums, holding seances by the tens of thousands, all over the world.

Mediumship, as J. Frazer Nicol has written me, is now a dead issue, for the simple reason that there are no longer any mediums to investigate. Essentially all the really able mediums of the past were exposed as frauds, and I think no pretended medium would at the present time dare to expose herself to a critical examination by competent scientists. But stories of mediums, and their seances, form perhaps the most intriguing chapter in the history of parapsychology, and I devoted considerable time to this topic in two of my previous talks.

2) Ghosts, Poltergeists, and Haunted Houses

Well, there are really no more haunted houses, tenanted by enchanting ghosts. Borley Rectory was known as the "most haunted house in England," and Harry Price, previously mentioned, spent many months at the Rectory and subsequently wrote a whole book on the subject. But after his death the Society for Psychical Research (London) appointed a committee of three highly responsible investigators. After a prolonged investigation the committee issued (in 1935) a 180-page report, which I have read in full. Their final conclusion was that there was no reported phenomenon that could not be explained rationally and that, sad to relate, some of the most impressive phenomena had been deliberately produced by Price himself! Some of the details are most interesting, but again there is no time to go into such matters. I will, however, insert one very small illustration.

Among the reported phenomena was a mysterious light that would appear occasionally in the window of a little-used room in the Rectory. The light would remain for only a few seconds, making it impossible to trace its source. But the committee found that a railroad ran past the house, not very far away, and whenever a train passed by, in one direction, the headlight of the locomotive was reflected, for a few seconds, in that particular window! So much for haunted houses.

3) Hallucinations and Apparitions

This is a legitimate subject for study in psychology, but I suspect that no one any longer believes that such reported visions have any prophetic or mystic import, as they were once supposed to have.

4) Divination

This is the ability to reveal significant facts about an object and especially about its owner, merely by grasping the object. I will presently describe a recently published example of this. Divination covers also the ability to discover hidden sources of water, by so-called dowzers, in which Dr. Rhine appears to believe. This is a large subject, but with no valid scientific evidence to support it.

5) Psychokinesis (PK Phenomena)

This is a subject of particular interest to physicists, and one on which much work has been done, in the past, in Rhine's laboratory. No prominent parapsychologist in England appears to believe in the reality of such phenomena, but Rhine certainly does. So, also, does Professor R.A. McConnell, at the University of Pittsburgh.

Since this effect implies that the mind alone can exert a physical torque on a die, for instance, causing it to settle with a certain face up, one different from that which it would have displayed by pure chance, we have here clearly a violation of conservation of energy.

Let me say immediately that in the long series of trials already made in such dice-throwing experiments, the net result does not deviate at all from the predictions of pure chance. But this fact does not phase the true believer. He then proceeds to divide the results into subgroups and finds, so he claims, that certain groups give results significantly above chance, and others significantly below chance (like runs of "good luck" and runs of "bad luck"). The statistics used to reach these conclusions have been challenged, and it is still doubtful whether the published deviations from chance are large enough to be really significant.

But why all these tens of thousands of throws of dice? Why not merely pivot a very light pointer, mount the affair in an evacuated vessel, and then have the reputed "psychic" will the pointer to rotate first to the right, and then to the left? The torque required for such a rotation is radically smaller than that needed to turn a die from one face to another, and a single successful experiment of this nature, properly witnessed, would prove the reality of psychokinesis. But no parapsychologist can be induced to try such a crucial experiment, or a corresponding crucial experiment in any other field of psychic phenomena. Instead, such persons spend years supervising tens of thousands of card-guesses or dice throws, where the interpretation of the results usually requires the use of statistics and where there are many possible sources of error.

I shall now speak in more detail of the last three of the eight divisions of the subject that I have listed. First, however, let me make a few additional remarks.

(Editor's note: These additional remarks, including the example cited under Divination, heading (4), are in the Addendum, pp. 260-264.)

6) Psychic Ability in Animals



Among the many strange beliefs held by Dr. Rhine and other parapsychologists is that in the "psi ability" of animals. Now everyone is aware of the seemingly miraculous abilities of various animals, birds, insects, and even fish, displayed in their regular habits of life. Much good scientific work has been done, and is now being done, in this field, and one by one the various phenomena are being explained in a rational manner.

The important point here is that the abilities under investigation are found to result always from the extreme acuity of one of the five normal senses. It is unnecessary to postulate any mysterious "sixth sense," including so-called "psi ability."

The normal sense commonly used by animals is that of smell, and the acuity of the olfactory organ, in many cases, is indeed almost unbelievable. One need recall only the case of a bloodhound tracking down a person, after being allowed to smell some garment that has been worn by that person. Just try to imagine the infinitesimal amount of odour left on the ground by a person as he walks or runs through, let us say, a forest. Yet if the trail is not too old, a bloodhound can follow it successfully.

A dispatch from London, printed in the San Francisco Chronicle of 22 November 1961 states that a night-flying moth, perceiving smell through its antennae, can locate a female at a distance of a mile or more--even a box where one has been.

One of the most remarkable examples of acuity of smell is afforded by salmon. All of you know that salmon are hatched in some small tributary stream and presently make their way down to the ocean. Their wanderings in the ocean are as yet unknown, but after two to seven years (depending on the species) the salmon that survive find their way up the river and finally up the particular tributary stream where they were born. There the eggs are fertilised and deposited and the salmon then die. Tagged salmon are not found in any other stream.

It is now known that as far as proceeding up a particular river and a particular stream is concerned, this is done solely by the sense of smell. Apparently each stream has a characteristic odour, depending on the nature of the vegetation on its banks, etc. When the nasal sac of salmon is plugged, they proceed in a completely random fashion.

When we come to the case of migratory birds, including homing pigeons, it is apparently the sense of sight that is involved. The migrating birds are believed to steer by the stars at night and by the sun by day. This has been shown, as I recall, by placing them in a planetarium and testing them with normal star arrangements, and then with abnormal ones.

As a final but purely spurious example, I may mention the several cases of horses who solve arithmetic problems, etc. In our own country the most famous case was that of the filly "Lady," of Richmond, Virginia, whom Rhine examined and pronounced definitely "psychic." But it is known that in all such cases the answer to any question must be known to someone visible to the horse, and it is transmitted to the horse usually by deliberate, but sometimes by unconscious cues.

7) Spontaneous Cases

This is the oldest branch of parapsychology and it will doubtless always be with us. Mrs. Rhine, at last report, had collected some eight thousand cases. I do not doubt that a million could be found, with sufficient time and effort. It seems as though every fourth or fifth person with whom I discuss the subject claims to have had one or more psychic experiences of his own. Unfortunately I have never personally had any; or rather, events that seemed at first very mysterious turned out on careful examination to have a rational explanation.

Unfortunately spontaneous cases, by their very nature, do not occur under scientifically controlled conditions, and cannot be conclusively verified. Let me give just two simple examples. A good friend of mine, who admits to a belief in psychic phenomena, has related to me several mysterious events. For instance, she one day opened the closed door of a little-used room in her home and found on the floor near the door a book that had been resting on an upper shelf of a bookcase in the room. The case was so far from the door that the book could not possibly have gotten to its discovered location by merely falling off the shelf. She swears that no one, not even her dog, had been in the room. Obviously there is no way of making a real scientific investigation of a report like this.

Another friend wrote me that she was in church, listening rather drowsily to a sermon, when she suddenly realised that she was saying, or thinking, to herself the sermon, one sentence ahead of the pastor! Interesting, if true, but how does one verify it?

As a simple example of a "vision" I quote one given at several places in the literature. I take the following from Soal and Bateman's book, Modern Experiments in Telepathy.

A girl of about ten years of age was walking along a country lane. Quite suddenly her surroundings seemed to fade away, and she saw her mother lying apparently dead on the floor of a little-used room at home, known as the "white" room. Near her on the floor was a lace handkerchief. The child was so upset by this vision that instead of going straight home she rushed to the doctor's house and persuaded him to go home with her. They found the woman lying on the floor of the "white" room, suffering from a severe heart attack. Beside her was the lace handkerchief. The doctor arrived in time to save her life.

As an example of a mass vision, or hallucination, I quote from a paper by C. D. Broad in the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research, Vol. 45 (1938-9), page 135. This story was related personally by Mazzini to Henry Sidgwick.

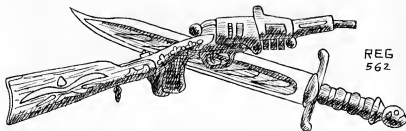
In or near some Italian town Mazzini saw a group of people standing gazing upwards into the sky. He went up to one of them and asked him what he was gazing at. "The cross-- do you not see it?" said the man, pointing to the place the cross was supposed to be. Mazzini could see nothing in the least cruciform in the sky; but on enquiring of others, he found that they also thought they were seeing a cross. At length Mazzini happened to notice one gazer who looked rather more intelligent than the rest, and also seemed to have a faint air of doubt and perplexity. Mazzini went up to him and asked him what he was looking at. "The cross," he said, "there." Mazzini took hold of his arm, gave him a slight shake, and said to him, "There is not any cross at all." A change came over the gazer's face as if he were waking from a kind of dream, and he answered, "No, as you say, there is no cross at all." He then walked away with Mazzini, leaving the rest of the crowd to enjoy their collective hallucination.

When it comes to predictions of future events, the classic book on the subject is Phantasms of the Living, by Gurney, Myers, and Podmore. This book contains some seven hundred cases, selected out of many thousands, which are given as especially authentic. But according to L.H. Rawcliffe, Illusions and Delusions of the Supernatural and the Occult (page 374), not one case among the seven hundred satisfies all the conditions required for a true verification. These conditions are: (1) that the clairvoyant person put his predictions in writing, (2) that he show the writing to two or more responsible persons, (3) that the event predicted occur subsequent to the foregoing acts, and (4) that the details of the event and of the prediction are both in sufficient agreement and sufficiently numerous to rule out the possibility of a purely chance coincidence.

I mention spontaneous cases at all mainly because it would appear that they are about all that is now left of parapsychology. I have already noted that we no longer have any mediums, and the one remaining main topic is that of card-guessing, to which I will devote the remainder of this talk. But as I shall show, there is little chance of further work even in that field. Dr. S.G. Soal, who has been the leading worker in England in the field of card-guessing, has now retired, and he told *Hansel in a personal interview that he would do no further work. I note that no work in card-guessing is now underway at Duke University and that the only supporting material shown to visitors consists of experiments now fully two decades old.

*Editor's note: The interviewer cited above is C.E.M. Hansel, a psychologist now at the University of Wales, whose book, ESP, A Scientific Evaluation was published in 1966 by Charles Scribner's & Sons.

In the same interview of Soal by Hansel, Soal made the remarkable statement: "A century hence the situation in parapsychology will be no different from what it is today." Can you imagine such a remark being made in regard to a legitimate science?



8) Telepathy and Clairvoyance

I turn now finally to the experiments in card-guessing. If there were time I should like to devote at least a full hour to this one topic, since it involves actual laboratory work and statistics of interest to physical scientists. It also involves much cheating, and the various probable methods by which the cheating was accomplished form in themselves an intriguing subject. Let me say, right at the start, that all evidence now in my possession indicates that all really high-scoring runs have been obtained fraudulently. The miraculous nature of many such results, if they are genuine, may be illustrated by the following figures.

I suspect that all of you know that in these experiments a pack of twenty five cards, five each of five different designs, is normally used. These are called Zener cards, since they were designed by Professor Karl E. Zener, a psychologist at Duke University. (Parenthetically, I am told that this name is now a source of acute embarrassment to Professor Zener.)

Now, since there are five different designs, the probability of guessing the first card correctly is obviously $1/5$. Similarly for the second card. The compound probability of getting the first two correct is then $1/5 \times 1/5$ or $1/5^2$. Continuing, we see that the probability of getting the entire twenty five cards correct is $1/5^{25}$ or roughly $1/3 \times 10^{17}$. Such a result is termed a "perfect" run, and several such perfect runs have been recorded in the literature.

One thus calculates that, on the basis of pure chance, a 17 perfect run would occur, on the average, once in every 3×10^{17} runs. Now normally it takes about ninety seconds to call a run. How long then would it take to call 3×10^{17} runs, at the rate of ninety seconds per run? I should really ask you to guess the answer, but I will tell you. It is roughly 10^{12} years (i.e., a million million years), or some forty times the present estimated age of our galaxy!

Dr. Rhine started systematic work in card-guessing about 1930, and the results were reported in book form in 1934. He obtained phenomenal evidence of telepathy (and clairvoyance) right from the start, but since there was an almost complete lack of controls these early results have not, in general, been taken seriously. Price, in his 1939 book already quoted writes,

In fact, some of the results savour of the miraculous. Though psychical researchers have, for eighty years, been seeking a subject able to demonstrate at will, under controlled conditions, the faculty of telepathy and failed to find one, Dr. Rhine discovered scores of them in his own university--some even in his own classroom.

Of the three "perfect" runs reported by Rhine in this early work, one was made by a divinity student named Hubert Pearce, of whom I will have more to say presently. As soon as more carefully designed controls were employed by Rhine, the scores made in his card-guessing experiments dropped to only slightly above those predicted by pure chance. But when calls are numbered in the thousands, even such results correspond to astronomical odds. Thus one expects five "hits" in a "run" of twenty five guesses, by pure chance. Now suppose one finds an average of six hits per run. For a single run the odds are only 1.6 to 1 against such a result. But for ²⁰ten thousand calls (four hundred runs) the odds are about 10 to 1 against such an average rate of success.

As Hansel has reported, a visitor at the Duke Laboratory is shown just two series of experiments, which are claimed to furnish conclusive evidence of the reality of psychic ability. One of these is the so-called Pratt-Woodruff series, first reported in 1939 (Journal of Parapsychology, 3, 121). This series was designed to test telepathy, that is, the agent was looking at the card while the percipient was trying to guess. The series consisted of 60,000 calls, using 32 unselected percipients. The average score was 5.204 hits. In other words, in each 123 calls there was, on the average, just one more hit than chance prediction! But because of the huge number of calls, the odds against even this score are 200,000 to one.

Concerning this series Rhine has written: "In the entire history of psychology no experiment has ever been carried out with such elaborate controls against all possible error." But when Hansel examined the detailed record sheets of this series, he discovered that just one of the thirty two percipients (denoted P.M.) had achieved really high scores. In fact, the odds against his total result are twenty million to one. All the other percipients got merely close-to-chance results.

When Hansel then examined in detail the runs of this single high-scoring percipient, he found numerical relations between successive runs that could not possibly have occurred by pure chance. These relations, in turn, pointed to the exact method of cheating that could have been employed, and Hansel finally duplicated precisely the original experimental set-up and showed that his postulated form of cheating was quite possible. The details are complex and I will not go into them now.

The other supposedly convincing series of experiments carried out in the Rhine laboratory is the so-called Pearce-Pratt series, reported in 1937 (Journal of Parapsychology, Vol. 1, p.70). This series was designed to test clairvoyance. The agent, at a planned time, placed the card to be guessed face down on the table, but did not look at it. The percipient was (supposedly) in another building, several hundred feet away. The single percipient was Hubert Pearce, previously mentioned, and here again Hansel was able to show just how the reported high scores could have been obtained by cheating on the part of Pearce. Hansel also exactly duplicated the original conditions and, acting as percipient, was able to achieve a very high score for a run, to the complete mystification of those concerned.

Later, if there is time, I will be glad to give details. I do want to say, however, that Pearce, now a minister in a middle-western state, has been written to several times, by another person and by Hansel, and has been directly accused of cheating. In his replies Pearce does not write one word in his own defense. All he will say is that Dr. Rhine is an honourable man! In other words, Rhine was, and seemingly still is, quite unaware of the cheating that occurred in his laboratory. Thus far, he has not been able to devise any truly fool-proof experiment, in spite of his assertions to the contrary. So much for the work of Dr. Rhine.

The main experiments on card-guessing, in England, have been carried out by Dr. S. G. Soal, former Lecturer in Pure Mathematics, University of London, but now retired, as already stated. For lack of time I refer only to the latest work done under his direction and reported in detail in a book by him, The Mind Readers, published in England in 1959 and in this country in 1960. At the urgent request of the Editor, I wrote a long (six thousand word) review of the book for the International Journal of Parapsychology.

The chief actors in this drama were two teen-age Welsh boys, first cousins, who served as agent and percipient. The experiments extended over two years, and about half of the runs yielded fabulously high scores, far higher, on the average, than in any previous investigation. There were, for instance, two "perfect" runs, four with twenty four hits, and one hundred seventy nine runs (over twenty five percent of the total) with twelve or more hits. (The probability of getting twelve or more hits is only 1/650.) But the other half of the runs yielded only chance results. This strange dichotomy between very high scores and merely chance results immediately suggests that the former were obtained fraudulently.

After the conclusion of the experiments Hansel suggested that the principal method used in cheating was probably the use of what we may call a supersonic whistle. It is well known that teen-age children can hear much higher frequency sounds than adults of, let us say, thirty years or older. In the laboratory it is customary to use a Galton whistle to produce high-frequency sounds. But it is unlikely that these boys owned, or could have bought, such an instrument. On the other hand, sheep-dog whistles are in common use in that part of Wales, and it has been noticed that in sheep-dog contests, certain trainers seem to be controlling their dogs in some mysterious way.

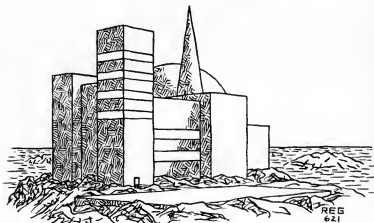
Hansel then found that by cutting off the end of such a whistle, he could produce the desired high-frequency sounds. Furthermore, if a rubber-tube were attached, the whole apparatus could be concealed and operated inside the clothing, with no visible external sign. In fact, Hansel and Christopher Scott, with the assistance of an eight-year-old girl acting as percipient, later duplicated some of the best experimental results of the two Welsh boys. Soal, and others, standing as close as possible to the agent, were unable to discover how it was done.

I mention here only one series of experiments that pointed strongly to the use of such a whistle. The two boys were seated in two different rooms, but only fifteen feet apart, in the home of one of the boys. There was a connecting door, and when the door was open and in the direct line between the boys, phenomenally high scores were invariably obtained. But when the door was closed, or when one boy was merely moved to the side, so that a wooden wall intervened, merely chance results were invariably obtained.

Evidently the stream of energy flowing from agent to percipient could not pass through a wooden door or wall, and also cast a fairly sharp shadow. High-frequency sounds satisfy both these conditions. Some time after the conclusion of the experiments, the two boys appeared on a special television program in London, with an apparatus secretly installed that would record (and make visible to the audience) any high-frequency sounds. But none was observed, and only chance results were obtained.

There are many additional interesting features of this investigation by Soal, but there is no time to go into further details. The important point here is that Soal, like Rhine, never seemingly made a really scientific study of possible methods of cheating. On the contrary, each man was sure he had excluded all such possibilities. Possibly Soal has now reluctantly come to the conclusion that his most impressive results were obtained fraudulently, and for that reason he has withdrawn entirely from research in parapsychology. Rhine has as yet given no public indication of doubt, but the fact that he, also, has apparently abandoned all work in card-guessing points strongly to a similar doubt.

As I have already stated, the one claimed scientific evidence of psychic ability (card-guessing) now seems to be a dead issue, and we are accordingly left with only the strange tales ("spontaneous cases") told by numerous persons not well trained in scientific methods -- tales of the sort that have been common since the dawn of history and that, I venture to say, will persist into the indefinite future. Scientific ideas and methods have as yet failed to penetrate to the vast majority of mankind.



addendum

This Week is a Sunday Supplement that appears weekly in several hundred newspapers having a combined circulation of some fourteen million. In the issues of February 19 and 26, 1961 there appeared a two-part article by a reporter, Jack Harrison Pollack. Part one was headed "Holland's Incredible Mind Readers" and part two, "Crime Busting with ESP." Pollack had visited Utrecht University (Holland) which has, I believe, the only department of parapsychology in the entire world, presided over by Dr. W.H.C. Tenhaeff, a 67 year-old Dutch scientist. Pollack describes him as "world famed," but a colleague of his at Utrecht University has written of Tenhaeff:

He is an extremely uncritical man, whose statements cannot be relied upon. To him parapsychology is some sort of religion that may not be criticized. Making propaganda seems to be more important to him than trying to find the truth by scientific methods. The title, "extraordinary professor" was conferred on him at the request of his own society.

Tenhaeff has working under his direction a group of persons with claimed psychic power, whom he calls "paragnosts." His "star performer" is a man named Croiset. According to Pollack, in part two of his article, these persons have helped the police solve numerous crimes. Pollack writes: "At first the police were skeptical. But they soon became converted as Dr. Tenhaeff and his paragnosts, working with authorities in many countries, recorded some amazing successes."

In complete contrast, the colleague already mentioned quotes from a paper by Dr. F. Brink, a Dutch police inspector who has made a special and detailed study of this subject. The quotation (translated from the original Dutch) reads:

The writer has the practical experience that people who, at a short notice, want information about the physical or psychological state of missing persons, or about facts and data, attach unfounded and non-critical value to statements of so-called paranormally gifted persons. To the police investigators, these statements continually turned out to be worthless and even confusing.

Pollack next gives an illustration of the claimed success of Croiset in solving a crime for the police. I first give verbatim Pollack's version. I then give the true and completely different facts in the case, as later discovered by Hansel, through direct correspondence with those concerned. Pollack writes:

An early success in this case I checked in the Parapsychology Institute and Dutch police files. On December 5, 1946 a pretty, blond, 21-year-old girl was returning home at 5:45 p.m. along a quiet contry road near Wierden, Holland. Suddenly, a man leaped out from behind a stone storehouse, and assaulted her, hitting her on the neck and arms with a hammer. Before he disappeared into the dark, she was able to wrench the hammer away from him.

Police contacted Dr. Tenhaeff, who came to the station, bringing Gerard Croiset, one of his team of paragnosts. Because the girl was in the hospital, Croiset didn't see her. Instead he picked up the hammer, his large hand squeezing the handle as police watched skeptically. Croiset concentrated:

"He is tall and dark, about 30 years old, and has a somewhat deformed left ear," said the paragnost. "But this hammer doesn't belong to him. Its owner was a man of about 55 whom the criminal visits often at a small white cottage near here. It is one of a group of three cottages, all the same."

The deformed left ear was a key clue. Several months later the police picked up a tall, dark 29-year-old man on another morals charge. His badly scarred and swollen left ear led to questioning about the first attack. Finally, he admitted assaulting the girl with a hammer. He said he had borrowed it from a friend who, the police discovered, lived in a white cottage on the edge of town, with two others just like it on either side.

Dr. Tenhaeff's files bulge with such cases. Each is documented with a recording or stenographic transcript of the prediction, and with statements confirming its accuracy from witnesses and police.

(This Week, February 26, 1961)

This is the end of my quotation from Pollack's article. I hope you will now try to remember, for the next couple of minutes, the various details as he gives them. As soon as the article appeared, I sent a copy to Hansel, at Manchester University. Hansel, in turn, wrote immediately to the chief of police of Wierden, Holland, and also to a friend of his on the faculty of Utrecht University. He received long and detailed replies from both persons, and I have a copy of each reply. I quote from the letter (written in English) by the chief of police, who, it turns out, is also the mayor ("burgomaster").

With a great interest and still greater astonishment, I read your letter of March 9th. How is it possible that a simple story can be mutilated in such a way! Maybe the answer is simple: when someone desires to see something special, after a certain time he will see it, even if it is not there.

Your letter was directed to me, as in Holland the burgomaster is normally also head of the local police, and so I'll try to answer it...When the story began on December 5th, 1946, I was already burgomaster of the town of Wierden, Holland.

So the young girl, indeed good-looking, lived with her family in a farm, about three kilometers from the village of Wierden. In the evening of the Fifth of December she returned home on her bicycle by a sand-road, with a big box of cardboard held in one hand...Being about 700 meters from her house she was indeed assaulted by a man. He did not leap from behind a stone storehouse. In the neighborhood there is not any building to be found. The man hit her twice with a hammer on the head, not on the neck and arms.

Then he saw the light of another bicycle, which was nearing, and fled away on his own cycle, leaving the wounded girl with his hammer. The girl was transported to her home, and it was not necessary to bring her to a hospital.

The policemen of course did all their best to find the man, but without any results in the beginning. After few days there circulated the name of a certain young man, called K. Who called the name first is not clear...It seems the name was mentioned because some people had noticed that he had tried to committed or tried to commit exhibitional facts...The only spur was the hammer.

to find the owner it was shown behind the window of a grocer's shop in the midst of Wierden, but nobody seemed to recognize it.

Then after several weeks, perhaps even six, I received the visit of an elderly sort of landlord, who lives at a country-place, not far from the spot where the assault was committed. The family had a girl-servant, the sister of the attacked young girl, and this girl did not dare to return home when she was not guided by the landlord. The last was of course rather annoyed about these trips every evening and asked me if I would allow him to take the hammer to Mr. Croiset and ask him information.

So happened. I don't know yet who belonged to the party which visited Mr. Croiset, then living at Enschede. And unhappily I don't neither know if the visit was beforehand announced to him. The last thing is in this kind of matter very important as later turned out. About the hammer Croiset told that it had been behind a big window. In fact it had been behind the window of the grocer. Further that the owner of the hammer or the owner of the window had a disease of the aerial ways. Indeed the grocer has bronchitis.

About the performer of the assault he told that he lived in a small house rather similar to the houses of the two neighbors, with a stone wall behind it. Further he told that it was a young person, but anybody will give young men greater chance to do such silly things than older men. Mr. K. was born December 16th 1919. And the man would have a deformed ear and a ring with a blue stone on it. The police could do nothing with these communications. Mr. K. had two normal ears and when he might possess a ring with a blue stone in it, he seemed never to wear it. So one month after another passes on without any result for the Wierden police.

Then in the early Springtime 1947 Mr. K. was arrested near the town of Almelo (which lies only 5 kilometers from Wierden) while committing the act of exhibitionism. He was tried for several hours by our police and at the end he confessed. We even yet don't know who was the owner of the hammer. This morning one of my policemen asked him, but Mr. K. refuses to tell us, so we suppose he had stolen it.

A few months after Mr. K. was condemned, I received a visit from Mr. Croiset. He begged me to write him a letter about the exact facts as Professor Tenhaeff was interested in these.

I did this making the condition that never the name of Wierden or Mr. K. should be mentioned in papers or in public. Unhappily, for the first (and for the last) time in my life I did not keep a second sample of this letter. You can imagine my stupefaction when some time later I heard broadcasting in my room, just at the moment I entered the following words: A burgomaster in the East part of our country writes us...and there came the story.

A few years later I was telephoned from Paris. by a young lady, belonging to the French Reader's Digest, who wanted to know everything about the matter from me.

Then Professor Tenhaeff held a lecture at Almele, where of course many members of the court of justice were present and I too. There he told the story again, mentioning the name of Wierden and arring the facts as if Croiset had discovered the performer of the crime. I interviewed him afterwards and begged him to send me a copy of my writing, but never received it and fear he will never send it, although he promised to do so.

In 1957 there appeared an article in a Dutch magazine "De Spiegel" where the history was depicted with still more untrue colors as in the English magazine...

I now quote again from the letter written by a member of the faculty of the University of Utrecht:

The principal paragnost with whom he (Tenhaeff) works is G. Croiset, a notorious clairvoyant-quack, whose "successes" are "verified" by Tenhaeff. When there is an adequate committee Croiset fails completely. I mention only his performances before the Dutch Television on June 2, 1955, the German Television on March 1, 1955, and in the Arnhem police office in November, 1958, which were a complete fiasco. I have personally investigated several of his "successful" cases and all turned out to be bogus.

The story mentioned in your letter to the superintendent of police at Wierden is known to me. It has been published a.o. by Dr. Tenhaeff, by G. Croiset (through the intermediary of a friend, a newspaper-man), and by G. Zorab (former secretary of the Dutch Society for Psychical Research), all in somewhat different wording and sometimes contradictory.

The letter then goes on to describe the assault, just as the burgomaster had written Hansel.

Hansel subsequently transmitted to Pollack all the facts he had thus collected. Pollack's reply contained the remarkable information that he had received some thousand letters concerning his article in This Week, and that Hansel's letter was the only one that was critical. It seems to me that this last remark represents perhaps the most significant aspect of the entire affair.

So much for the ability of "psychic" persons to aid police in the solution of crimes.

THE BOMBARDIER

The pieces of the alphabet broke into pieces
 like the annihilation of a castle
 of colourful blocks The fluttering heart
 flutters like a bird in a baby's hand
 What is he saying Why does he break
 into tears

 The water swarms in over the sand
 the castle vanishes
 the bird lies shattered on the hearth
 Will no one pity this desolate shore forever ruined
 Will no one love our mad destroyer
 No No one Never

UPON BEING FORBIDDEN ENTRANCE TO A CASTLE

How easily these stones support
 Their own dead weight.
 The arch rests
 Lightly
 On the darkness beneath.
 When, as I approach,
 The door is closed on my face,
 The walls of the enchantment
 Collapse upon me.
 I too prefer a world
 Without speech.

--Thomas M. Disch

THE FOUR COWS

4 cows 4 cows 4 cows 4
1 brown 2 brown 3 brown more
Standing in a standing in a standing in a field
Feeling mighty blue,
Chew chew chew.

Green field green field green field green
4 cows 4 cows standing in the rain
3 heads up and one head down
Feeling mighty glum,
Chum chum chum.

4 cows 4 cows standing in the drizzle
Patter on the back, patter on the muzzle
No heads up and four heads down
Lonely and damp.
Champ champ champ.

4 cows 4 cows 4 cows 4
1 brown 2 brown 3 brown more
Gray is the sky and green is the field
Feeling mighty blue.
Chew chew chew.

---John Sladek

ENGLISH, AMERICAN

One or the other is becoming the international language.
 They are two not in subtlety
 but in flex. Phrases are English and as
 American tries to imitate, so American freezes
 paraphrastically. The metaphor of sensory im-
 pact is still mine; I
 can catch the immediate
 window light on blue bottles, asps
 under cactus, Turkish
 cymbals, speaking American; I
 can analyze them mathematically and emotionally.
 In English I can only tie them in
 successful periods. That's dangerous.
 Word must follow word over the world.
 Bottle
 break like suns
 in any meaning. Words
 as blue brittle light--

--Samuel R. Delany

EXHAUST

I endure a quivering sadness,
My chest pierced by Tuesday's boredom;
Chafed into altered piety upon the Season's crust.
Secret bones refuse the enormous passion;
A howl of dungeon's madness
Within the vault of deserved terror.
The master's sermon of pure sensation
Illumines youth into atrophied age,
A dessicated apostle with leaking nostrils
Declares upon the crag of decayed behavior.

CROWDED CIRCUS

Jungle teleology in primeval play;
A deeper accent than nature's prank.
Loud array of inevitable guises;
Rudimentary patrons in cellular effigy
Coalescing the pithecoïd question.
A rosary of virile images
Jostles blushing ancestors from fabled clods.
Through the noble grace of the instant peasant
Shines the transfigured medullary tube dwelling in apes.

--Bernard B. Perlman, M.D.

Depends his heart
on five government columns
in five states senseless
Depends his heart
on the vine that climbs
to the fingered skull
Depends his heart
on the limbs
that meet behind the eyes
to move the wind

At the heart of the hour
at the centre of day
the core of the year

When all seasons
enter dependance

SUNDAY POEM

where are the trees
the trees (no trees)
 they took to their roots disease
 and they died
where are the limbs
 the limbs fell off
 the holes are eyes
where did I come
from mother
 the thighs of the trees
 grew thin and barked
 their shins on the dark
the sky
has fallen in
 the sky is at
 the top of the trees
there are
no trees
 (no) trees (no)
and what are birds (perched)
 (perched) on the limbs
 of the sky

Part III: The Mystic Renaissance

A Survey of F. Orlin Tremaine's "Astounding Stories" by Leland Sapiro

SECTION VII -- Mysticism and the Mechanical Psychology

Here we must observe one of mysticism's less familiar concomitants, which can be denoted as the mechanical psychology. This phrase designates any theory of mind which presupposes a one-one correspondence between a pattern of behavior and a specific part of the human brain.

For example, there was Amelia Long's "Mind Master" (December 1934), whose machine can "blot out the brain cells harboring criminal impulses"; Harl Vincent's "Rex" (June 1934), a robot which starts to "think for himself" as the result of a quantum jump in its brain; and Stanton Coblentz' "Doctor de Kalb" (January 1934), whose new serum makes it "as stylish to change one's character as to discard last year's coat."

These writers are guilty of mechanical psychology through their unspoken assumption that motivation can be explained in terms of events to which one can point -- as with Long's belief about "impulses" residing in specific brain cells or Vincent's concerning the determination of initiative by a single electron--or by Coblentz' implicit comparison of the mind to a blackboard on which personality traits can be written and erased.³³

The most spectacular application of mechanical psychology was Harry Bates's "A Matter of Size," wherein a handsome male and an ugly female are fitted with metallic headbands, which in turn are connected to a "complicated battery of scientific apparatus." The mechanism is actuated for just an instant, following which the couple "looked deeply at each other, and... kissed each other on the mouth." Such machinery, it is explained, "is the way we make people fall in love with each other." It does something in their heads."

Now each of the names just cited was that of a mystical writer. Messrs. Bates and Vincent we have discussed previously; Miss Long's beliefs were indicated most clearly ³⁴ (in another magazine) by her mystical unification of time; while Mr. Coblentz' attitude was conveyed by an overt hostility toward scientists ("The Green Plague") and by a nostalgia for Man's previous ignorance, as in "Mana from Mars" or his later Glow-worm Flower. ³⁵

From these juxtapositions of mysticism and mechanism one suspects that there is some connexion between them; and this suspicion is confirmed by Kenneth Burke (A Grammar of Motives, 289 ff.), who remarks that they both entail a "narrowing of motivational circumference," i.e., a discounting of motivation as a cause for human behavior.

Thus mechanical psychology describes the human mind by terminology which deliberately excludes purpose. In Dianetics, for example, with its pseudo-electric vocabulary of "demon circuits," "monitor cells," etc., the brain is conceived by analogy to a computing machine. But a computing machine is not motivated: it is actuated--by the pressing of a button or the insertion of an IBM card.

In mysticism, however, purpose is excluded by being made omnipresent. For it is not unity by itself that characterises the mystical doctrine, but unity with some cosmic purpose, which assumes the form of a World-Mind or Universal Intelligence. But if final results are determined by an external purpose or intelligence, then (regardless of what happens) one always can say, "It was meant to be" or "The gods intended it so." If events are "fated" to end in a certain way, then one's personal desires are irrelevant.

Mechanical psychology, then, deliberately eliminates purpose; whereas mysticism "arrives at somewhat the same result unintentionally, in making purpose absolute, and thereby... transforming it into a fatality" (*ibid.*, 291).

Of course, the mechanical psychology need not be stated explicitly: the author simply can assume a relationship between a specific behavior and a specific cerebral component, and then depict how a change in one induces a corresponding change in the other.

All this leads to John Campbell, alias Don A. Stuart, the consistently ablest writer of the Mystic Renaissance; for the mechanical psychology was prefigured quite clearly in his very early story, "Piracy Preferred" (Amazing Stories, June 1930), where a kleptomaniac is cured by surgical removal of a blood clot from his brain. In his present role as editor of the one-time Astounding Stories, Mr. Campbell has expressed opinions which, I think, can justifiably be classified as mystical, so his earlier stories naturally invite perusal for more tokens of his latter-day mysticism.

If the critic reads no further, he might point to this author's "Out of Night" (October 1937), which is climaxed by the visitation of Aesir, the embodiment of mankind's collective will. "I am the billions you slaughtered at the conquest," he tells the Sarn ruler of mankind, "...No force, no ray, no thing of matter can influence my being...I am Aesir, the pantheon of mankind, and mankind itself..."

But in a later story, "Cloak of Aesir" (March 1939), Mr. Campbell specifies that this visitor is just an ordinary human being, surrounded by a field of negative energy which is generated by entirely physical methods.

Another story by this writer, "The Escape" (May 1935), seems the very antithesis of mysticism.

Aies was...twenty-seven days on the final...month of her twenty-first year now. Automatically at twenty one she knew the Population Control Commission would call her in to "decide" what type of man she should marry. And Aies had not the slightest desire to have it decided for her. What she disliked most was that when they had decided, they would, with the aid of the conditioning and control division, make her decide the same thing. And they'd make her like their decision.

Aies Marlan wants to marry her present lover, Paul Treray, artist; but she suspects that the Control Commission has selected another man, Bruce Randall, as her future mate. Treray, also, is unhappy.

"Science has no conception of humanity..."

"...Art is not science. It is above science. It is comprehension without knowing..."

"Aies--they are so stupid...Playing with lives, with loves and hates, with things they do not know. Only love can know what love is for."

The two lovers run away, but eventually they are caught, and Aies is conditioned as originally planned. In the final scene she meets once more the person who was her previous object for distaste.



Aies rose with a smile as Bruce came into her room...

...She looked up at him. Her eyes changed for a moment; a doubt seemed to creep into them. "I suppose they made me feel that way. I suppose I don't really do--"

Bruce looked down into her eyes. "Does it matter, dear? All we seek in life is happiness...Love is the greatest happiness in the world... and so if it is, does it matter whence it comes...? Does it matter if it is because someone else thought it wise or because we developed it by association and contacts that were pleasant?"

"...Unfortunately, till men learned the secret of conditioning, the head could not rule the heart. Does it matter, now that the love is, from whence it came?"

"No," said Aies, and stopped further discussion.

In the mystically oriented "Astounding" this triumph of sense over sensibility ordinarily would be regarded as something scandalous -- but our previous observations indicate that "Escape" is merely an extension of the beliefs expressed in such stories as "Piracy Preferred" and "A Matter of Size." For the attitudes of Mr. Campbell's protagonist are depicted as being separable--i.e., capable of being singled out--from the rest of her personality and therefore subject to change at the pleasure of the Control Commission.

The mechanical naivete, of course, lies not in the psychic manipulation itself--which is consistent with the present-day art of Psychology--but in the author's assumption that such an emotionally charged set of attitudes could be altered without a corresponding derangement of all other psychic components.

So the argument is that Mr. Campbell's present-day mysticism is correlated with the mechanical psychology, as espoused by him not only in fiction proper but in the ultra-mechanical Diagnostics. Mysticism and the mechanical psychology, then, appear to be equivalent in the sense that either one can imply a conversion to the other. ³⁶ If my supposition is correct then Mr. Campbell illustrates it; if it is not then the mysticism and mechanism combined in this author and in his Astounding contemporaries must be regarded as accidental.

Here it is necessary to specify why parapsychology (and there are P. J. Campbell's belief in it) is to be called mystical. A quick way to bring this subject into the domain of intelligible discourse is to cite a physicist's remark that telepathic signals, if they exist, must obey the Inverse Square law and can travel no faster than the velocity of light. Mr. Campbell's answer was that "for somebody who has never studied ESP" this scientist (Dr. Milton Rothman) "surely knows a lot about what it must and what it can't do"--³⁷ but both restrictions are justified easily.

The first follows by elementary geometry. The surface area S of a sphere varies as the square of its radius R ; so if telepathic signals (or any other kind) are emitted from its centre, then E/S , the energy impinging on unit area (i.e., energy per unit area) must vary as the reciprocal of S , i.e., as the reciprocal of R squared.

The second restriction arises because the absence of some limiting velocity is not science but magic (see page 248), and experiments to-date all indicate that this limiting velocity is that of light.

The mystical nature of "psi" is comprised in the Believer's denial of both restrictions: not only are such signals instantaneous but their strength is independent of distance from the transmitter. Of course such claims could be "explained" in terms of the familiar occult unification, the universe being One in the sense that every part is in immediate contact with every other part. But rather than invoke the All-Soul of Plotinus or the Blavatskian I-Know-Not-What the modern Believer (e.g., Dr. Rhine) states that ESP occurs outside the four dimensional space-time continuum. We cannot discuss the meaning of such justifications, since they have none: by definition the space-time continuum includes everything; therefore it is senseless to talk of anything "outside" it.

In our previous discussions about mystic unifications in the Tremaine "Astounding" we noticed that space-time has a structure in the sense of here-there and before-after, so our conclusions about ESP must be the same as for these earlier, more general manifestations of occultism. To assume that signals can be received in no time (or "before" in the sense of precognition) is to deny not just the possibility of science but the possibility of any rational discourse.

Thus if "psi" is justified by older methods it is mystical in the sense of the One; if it receives modern justification it is mystical in the sense of being incomprehensible.

SECTION VIII -- Some Less Pleasant Topics

Associated with the mechanical psychology is the "influencing machine" story, where motivation is furnished by a mechanical apparatus or some other external agency. Typical was Raymond Gallun's "Godson of Almarlu" (Oct., 1936), in which financier Jeff Scanlon, with no prior scientific training, designs a power generator, capable of supplying limitless energy to "every one in the world." It finally is revealed that Scanlon's actions were determined not by himself, but by the planet Almarlu, whose residents had constructed a machine to implant fixations in the minds of certain Terrestrials.

"Before their world broke up to form the asteroids, the people of Almarlu devised a machine which...through the ages would now and then influence terrestrial life, guiding it and protecting it..."

"I'm one of the tools of Almarlu, as maybe...chaps such as Pasteur and Edison were...Certain things were implanted in my mind when I was a baby; they came to the fore when it was time."

A similar machine is conceived in Arthur J. Burke's Golden Horseshoe (Nov. 1937), whose Cleve Tatum, listening to the profundities uttered by a stupid tourist at Yellowstone Park, concludes that they must have been implanted in his mind. 38

...Out of the mouths of fools and tourists!...Cleve Tatum believed in telepathy, in fact in supertelepathy, by which he explained the strange inspirations that come, sometimes, to men of genius, apparently from outside.

In a similar fashion one also can explain the strange inspirations that come, sometimes, to lunatics, apparently from outside. As explained by Arthur Cox, the insane person "is unwilling to accept certain...impulses as being his own, so he interprets them as originating from outside himself. To justify this idea he invents stories of diabolical machines and sinister influences." 39

To quote another writer,

The schizophrenic influencing machine is a machine of mystical nature. The patients are able to give only vague hints of its construction.

...It produces...thoughts and feelings by means physics is inadequate to explain. In such cases, the machine is often called a "suggestion-apparatus."

...Clinical psychiatry explains the symptom of the influencing machine as analogous to the ideas of persecution in paranoia, which the patient invents in order to justify his delusions of grandeur. 40

In recent times such paranoia received its most frightening exemplification in the Shaver Mystery, and similar feelings are not entirely absent among the relatively sane followers of occult doctrine.

For, as noted by Kenneth Burke (op. cit.) a persecution complex enables the occultist to strengthen his feelings of oneness, the world being conceived as "one" in the sense that it is united against him and against the acceptance of his unorthodox ideas.

Scientists often are conceived by the occult person as organised into cliques, analogous to his own esoteric societies, which persecute anybody whose theory differs from the official dogma.

On occasions, it is conceded, a scientist may perceive the truth, but then he must expect disciplinary action from his colleagues. Witness, for example, the case of Ronald Bogelman, in Warner van Lorne's "Follow the Rocket Trail," whose "radical ideas" cause his expulsion from the International Society for Scientific Research."

41

Still more undignified is the fate of Professor Conway, in R. deWitt Miller's "The Shapes" (Feb. 1936), who claims that the stars are much closer to Earth than the "many billions of miles" calculated by astronomers. "Somebody miscalculated at the beginning," he tells the sceptical Professor Blevins, "and the whole damn bunch of you have been swearing to it ever since..."

To prove his thesis Conway leads the scientist to a lake-side cliff, to witness the rescue of a lost interstellar expedition. There is a sound emanating from the water, then a sequence of over-sized bubbles. "Those shapes aren't of this world," explains Conway, "They belong in a world of pressure, terrible pressure which forced them to become pliable, nebulous...They stay down there in the lake, so the pressure of ...tons of water will keep them from exploding."

There follows a shrieking crescendo, as something resembling a ball of fire hits the lake. "They've come for them," Conway shouts, "...Five hundred years they've waited...hoping that some day they could leave this unfamiliar Earth where they were stranded when their space ship broke down."

Seconds later, there is another outburst, in the opposite direction.

"They've gone," Conway screamed.

He staggered. The shove was utterly unexpected... He had no chance to...regain his balance.

His body toppled over the edge of the rock wall... The churning water played a moment with the limp form, then sucked it out into the lake.

Professor Albert Blevins stood motionless...He muttered to himself..."Science has explained everything... Nothing must shake it, nothing --"

Persecution, therefore, is not necessarily accomplished by diabolical machinery; since the occultist also is endangered because of the secret knowledge he thinks he possesses. 42

SECTION IX -- Objections and Conclusions

With respect to Messers Gallun and Binder let us put the Question once more. Godson, of course, was patently absurd, since a machine capable of such foresight is little short of Omniscience itself; but worse than this, the story was tedious. Part of the blame can be attached to Gallun's particular theme; since insofar as a man's actions are "influenced" they represent motions of a puppet rather than volitions of a human being -- and hence are without interest. ⁴³ Nevertheless, a capable writer can compose an acceptable story on this topic, ⁴⁴ and Gallun possessed unquestionable literary competence, as shown, e.g., in his "Davy Jones' Locker," with its skilful rendition of alien patterns of thought.

We therefore assume that Gallun's frequent lapses in literary technique were simply an effect of his rapid speed of composition -- and that these lapses were detectable even by the relatively insensitive readers of "Astounding," as in the complaint (about "Son of Old Faithful") that "it wasn't written well -- just plain everyday sentences." ⁴⁵

Next we consider an early contribution of Otto Binder, the darkly mystical "Ships that Come Back" (November 1935).

Ostensibly, Ships is just another "epic of the spaceways," a narrative of mutiny and death on board the space-freighter Edison. In the opening scene, First Officer Sorrel raises himself, bruised and shaken, from the floor of the control room, where he has been lying for an undetermined time; then he assists the dazed Captain Robey, who is in a similar condition.

It quickly transpires that all crew members have been knocked unconscious and that the Edison is nearly fifty million miles off course. Robey surmises that a "tenner" -- space terminology for a large meteor -- has grazed the ship, although this does not explain why everybody on board has been unconscious for approximately seventeen hours.

Inspecting the craft, Sorrel finds that the emergency fuel tank has been ripped apart by "some inexplicable force," but that otherwise the Edison is ship-shape.

"Relief to hear that," said Robey...What's your theory, Mr. Sorrel?"

"I don't know sir," said Sorrel noncommittally.

"Well, what could it have been?"

"...It's my opinion, sir, that there are things in space--mysterious forces, I might say--that no one knows anything about...I'll tell you sir, what makes me question grazing a tenner...Any contact with a meteor that big at our speed...would not simply bump us off course. More likely, sir, it would bash in at least one hull plate...The hull, though, is undamaged...Also, Liska is a triple-A pilot; he just doesn't let tenners get close."

Robey's face clouded. "Sticking up for him, eh? Think maybe I'm too hard; Sorrel, you talk too much. You're to obey orders, not air your pet theories."

Aside from a reference to a "mysterious force, probably emanating from that meteor" Mr. Binder does not elucidate the cause of damage--and this ambiguity was a source of difficulty to at least one reader who, while (rightly) praising the story, complained that "...I would have liked it better had the mysterious force been explained a little. 46

But one cannot explain the unexplainable: it is Officer Sorrel, with his talk about "mysterious forces...that no one knows anything about"--and which, it is implied, no one can know anything about--who articulates most clearly the mystical frame of mind found so often in Orlin Tremaine's magazine.

.....

Having indicated these examples of mysticism, we next must ask what non-mystical writers were persistent contributors to "Astounding's" success? I.E., if we exclude the works of John Campbell and Harry Bates, plus C.L. Moore's remarkable "Bright Illusion"--with its implied non-material essences--what is there to be praised from more rationally-minded authors?

The most original stylist of "Astounding's" younger writers was David Daniels, whose Way of the Earth was inspired by current scientific fairy tales (of John Fearn, e.g., and the early Donald Wandrei), a designation which arises not only from their oversimplified characters but from their atmosphere of scientific naivete in which practically anything was possible. By contrast, Daniels' story was a consciously wrought fairy tale, written in the guise of a science fiction story, and so exemplified the difference between creative and semi-automatic writing.

Cited earlier was Stanley Weinbaum's Lotus Eaters, with its example of rationality personified; equally good was his Adaptive Ultimate, with its solution of the insoluble biological problem: how to neutralise an organism which is immune to literally anything? Weinbaum's originality is attested not just by his many imitators in the Thirties--John Fearn, Arthur Barne, Eric Russell, Raymond Gallun--but his derivatives even in the present age. 47

There was Howard Wandrei's "The God Box," designation of a camera-sized apparatus, with control knobs carved in the shape of Egyptian deities, which can transport objects within its focus to any desired place. Its finder, archaeologist Paul Pense (who starts to burn incense in his room, and now imagines himself as an Egyptian priest) has "romantic" notions about a trip to the end of the universe; but these are scrutinised via the ironical common-sense of his partner, Graham Thorn, engineer--with such opposition giving the clearest explicit distinction in Astounding Stories between mysticism and rationality.

In the next issue, "The Wall" by this same author provided a second variation on mechanical wonders--as opposed to the "thought-variant" emphasis ("Inflexure," "Sidewise in Time") on strange natural phenomena--while his "Time Haven," several months later, gave the ultimate variation of the "John Jones' Dollar" theme, whereby a small investment grows, via compound interest, to an astronomical sum. Howard Wandrei's short stories were frequently the best in the magazine, partially because they lacked the diffuse grandiosity of more highly praised works by his brother Donald.

Finally, if the non-mystic circle is completed via "The Shadow out of Time," by the ultra-rationalist H.P. Lovecraft, we find exactly four creative writers. This is apparently twice the number of our original mystic duo--but within eighteen months all except one from this quartet had expired, and the initially promising writers failed to take their places. Binder's story, e.g., was followed by a rapid descent, the author touching bottom with "Queen of the Skies" and its suave, sneering villain; while Clifton Kruse, after two conscientiously written insect stories, "Dr. Lu-Mie" and "Osa the Killer," did "Fractional Ego" plus chauvinistic tales about "Don Kelz of the I.S.P."--which even the readers of "Astounding" found objectionable.

Indeed, of all Tremaine's early contributors--in the occult party or out--only John Campbell stayed alive in the sense of continuing to write while maintaining his former standards. The capable writers either died in the literary sense (Otto Binder, Raymond Gallun, Clifton Kruse), died in the literal sense (David Daniels, H.P. Lovecraft, Stanley Weinbaum), or ceased--at least temporarily--to write in this field (Harry Bates, Frank Kelly, C.L. Moore, Howard Wandrei).⁴⁸ Campbell's artistic integrity, therefore, was almost the only fact of positive importance during Tremaine's last two years of editorial tenure.

From our present vantage, Mr. Campbell's works serve as virtual "touchstones" for the Astounding story, because most of his themes also were treated by lesser writers.⁴⁹ The theme of Worlds within Worlds is discussed elsewhere --the standard being Campbell's "Atomic Power," the other story being Donald Wandrei's "Colossus." As an exercise, the reader can compare "Dead Knowledge" and "The Whisperers" by these same respective authors (their common theme: Microscopic Intelligence); he also will find it instructive to examine the theme of Human Degeneracy, as conveyed in Campbell's "The Machine" and Nat Schachner's "Orb of Probability."

In the present context, however, the most relevant example is John Christopher's "Noon's Repose" (Infinity Science Fiction, April 1957), which one critic summarises thus:

Christopher tries his hand at a eugenic society where "cupids" condition love between unwilling couples. In the end, a cupid succeeds in uniting the couple, but fails to overcome the sanctity of true-love-by-accident. If you have never read Campbell's "The Escape," look it up to see what can really be done with this basic idea.⁵⁰

In Mr. Christopher's story the conditioning apparatus is frustrated by an unknowable something within a human female; the author's general theme, the inadequacy of mechanistic science, therefore is related to the notion, discussed previously, that intelligence is somehow "not enough." Such concepts preclude literary excellence not because of their mystical associations --which for present purposes can be regarded as accidental-- but because they are clichés, which instead of representing the author's own thinking exemplify percepts acquired ready-made from parents, moral teachers, and popular entertainers. "Noon's Repose" is inferior because, unlike Campbell's story, it transfers the current morality without examining it, the author's intent being "not to analyze the ethics but to exploit the sentiment."

It is noteworthy that despite their lack of conceptual thought, stories with a "moral" similar to Christopher's, e.g., "Before Earth Came," "The Isotope Men," sometimes were denoted as "thought variants." In a sense, the printing of such fiction was a necessity: during the middle Thirties there still existed relatively few capable science-fiction writers, so that Tremaine, like most other editors, was obliged to buy certain works which he knew to be inferior: he simply could not omit (say) twenty pages in a given issue, with the explanation that on that occasion there was not enough "quality" writing to fill the magazine.

So I conjecture that Mr. Tremaine denoted certain works as "thought-variants" for the same reason that the chef mashes together the week's left-overs, designates them by the collective title of "salisbury steak," and serves them as the day's Blue Plate Special. A restaurant which pledges itself to feature something different each day occasionally must designate a common item with a new title; and by a similar commitment, the editor of Astounding Stories was obliged to, ⁵¹ designate at least one item per month as a "thought-variant."

Only the mediocre or inept writer is praised for his "ideas"; indeed, such a writer can be praised for nothing else. In the words of Tremaine's successor (i.e., Campbell himself):

...all men may be created free, but they are not created equal. Some are good writers, and some merely have ideas.

("Writing," Ad Astra, I (1940), 4.)

That inferior writers did receive editorial praise for their "thought-variants" was a sign of Tremaine's journalistic talent, through which he turned a deficiency into an asset and simultaneously accomplished (see page 169) the subtlest deception in the history of pulp magazines.

"Thought-variants," while usually lacking specifically mystical notions, did exhibit the diffuse banality so characteristic of occult writings--and such embroidered nothingness was used by the editor to sell his magazine. My previous argument--about mysticism being an asset only when it represented a particular sensibility--now must be modified, for sometimes the externals of mysticism (facile interpretations of oneness or cosmic resonance) were parleyed into assets--of the strictly financial variety.

In any case, such pseudo-mystical tales were in the literary sense accidental, since they represented no fixed editorial policy; many of them, I think, would have been rejected had they been submitted during the lifetime of "Astounding's" more conscientious authors. Certainly Tremaine himself was concerned with more than just the externals of mysticism, his predilections showing clearly in his own story, "The Upper Level Road" (printed under the name Warner van Lorne). One might object that on its own basic premise, the now familiar "alternate" world tangent to ours, the story follows no consistent scheme--for there is a mediaeval castle in this second continuum but neither mediaeval people nor their descendants--however a similar lapse of coherence is required for the egress itself, since the voyager cannot cross into the new space unless he is mentally dissociated from our own, as when his consciousness, at the crucial instant, lies between wakefulness and dream. In his rendition of such indeterminacy Tremaine exhibited a mystic deftness not equalled since C.L. Moore's "Bright Illusion"--nor again until her "There Shall Be Darkness" some years later--and it is in such evocation of mystery that the special talent of the occult mentality appears to reside.

I conclude, then, that mysticism in its external aspects played a role (if only by default) in the financial success of Tremaine's magazine, while as a particular type of sensibility it was important through being possessed by two major writers and by the editor. For, despite his concessions to the more sordid aspects of occult doctrine, Orlin Tremaine showed a unique literary discernment--a discernment whereby science fiction could evolve from a didactic exercise into a form of art.

FOOTNOTES

33) Mechanical should not be confused with mechanistic psychology. If, e.g., somebody claims that motivation is explicable in terms of relationships between neural gradients, then his reasoning is mechanistic; but he would be guilty of mechanical psychology only if he assumes a one-one correspondence like those cited above.

34) See Amelia Long's "Justice in Time," Stardust, May 1940: " 'Since all time is coexistent,' he said, 'there is no such thing as past, present, or future.' " (p.12)

35) Cf. John Carroll's remark about this story in the September 1936 "Brass Tacks" (p.157): "It has the taint of cheap mysticism and a definite anti-progress moral."

36) Under the Newtonian world-view, mechanism leads to purpose; for if the universe is regarded as a gigantic clock-work mechanism, then one infers conscious design on the part of its Maker.

37) Milton Rothman's statement appeared in the eighth SFWA Bulletin (September 1966, p.7) and John Campbell's answer in the next issue (November 1966, p.10).

38) Another occult belief is that man has to be "given" intelligence by something or somebody, just as his big inspirations must be "given" to him from the outside. See Eric Russell's "Mana," December 1937, which depicts ants being endowed with intelligence by the last human being: "Satisfaction shone upon his features while he studied a group of insects laboriously urging out the midget cart...He swung an arm in a sweep embracing the...cosmos. "Even as it was given to us, by those whom we could never know, I give it to those who can never know man.' "

FOOTNOTES (continued)

39) "Fantastic Fiction," Science Fiction Advertiser, Fall 1953, 7-8.

40) Victor Tausk, "On the Origin of the 'Influence Machine'" Psychoanalytic Quarterly (1953), quoted by G. Legman, Neurotica, Spring 1951, 38-9.

41) Also see the time-theorist of Eric F. Russell's and L.T. Johnson's "Seekers of Tomorrow" (July 1937), who "like many other geniuses...died discredited by his contemporaries because he had asserted that it would be...possible to travel in time."

42) These uglier aspects of mysticism were never exhibited in the fiction of John W. Campbell--nor would they be displayed by any scientifically trained person, since the scientists' exchange of data is incompatible with the occultist's desire for secrecy.

43) An objection might be that the "influencing" of Scanlon is not revealed until the very end. But with Gallun's mechanical writing and the lack of motivation anywhere in the story, the revelation might as well have occurred at the beginning.

44) See Eric Russell's Sinister Barrier and Robert Heinlein's The Puppet Masters.

45) Robert Hood, Jr., letter in "Brass Tacks," Sept, 1935, 153.

46) J.J. Johnson, "Brass Tacks," February 1936, 155.

47) See Jim Blish, Skyhook, Winter 1952-3, P. 34: "As for 'Pest'...by Randall Garrett and Lou Tabakow, with its cuddly animals with the telepathic ears, nausea is not enough. I can only suggest that both authors...be piled in the middle of the floor and set fire to. The man who should apply the match is Stanley G. Weinbaum."

48) This seems to be contradicted by the appearance in the November 1936 "Astounding" of Howard Wandrei's "Macklin's Little Friend." But the subject-matter of this story leads one to believe that it was a rejection from Weird Tales instead of something originally submitted to Tremaine's magazine--a conjecture verified by Donald Wollheim in the July 1936 Phantagraph (p.3), according to whom "Howard Wandrei...says that he is no longer writing science fiction."

49) "Technique as Creation," Inside-Science-Fiction (new series), I (1962).

50) Lester del Rey, Science Fiction Forum, I (1957), 24.

51) Replying to a letter in the December 1935 issue (p.157), Tremaine said that "We try for 1 T.V. a month." There were twenty four thought-variants, of which exactly half were written by the unspeakable trio, Nat Schachner (5), J.R. Fearn (4), and Warner van Lorne (3). Looking the other way, we can list the stylists of this period as John Campbell, C.L. Moore, and H.P. Lovecraft--and acceptable work always was submitted by Harry Bates, Frank Kelly, Howard Wandrei, and the short-lived pair, David Daniels and Stanley Weinbaum. No story by any of these last eight writers ever was labelled as a "thought-variant."

POST MORTEM

A separate note is necessary for Donald Wandrei, whose longer stories presupposed a universe absolutely saturated with occult correspondences and who often showed explicit interest in mysticism. See, e.g., his allusion ("Earth Minus") to the ancient "mystical doctrine" and his description of the dying "Colossus" heroine, whose eyes became glazed "with something only a mystic could interpret." See also the scientist of "Infinity Zero," who appears to have "achieved the mythical wisdom of the ages."

(The word "mythical," which I cannot understand in this context, is perhaps a typesetter's substitution for the author's "mystical," with a similar explanation applying, perhaps, to the passage quoted on page 86, where Plotinus' mystical ascent to Beauty (Enneads, I,6 and VI,9) is attributed to Plato.)

But the mystic sensibility cannot be ascertained by searching for direct expressions of the mystical doctrine. As noted earlier, the mystically sensitive person is one who perceives correspondences between objects of perception, and here I must state dogmatically that in Mr. D. Wandrei's writing no such correspondence exists--that his mysticism represents something deliberately acquired rather than something intrinsically perceived.

(For details see--in addition to the article cited above in F.N.49)--"A Matter of Judgement," Miafan #7, in which Howard Wandrei's "The Other" is compared to Donald Wandrei's story, "Murray's Light.")

In justice to Donald Wandrei I should at least note that he still displayed a range of awareness wider than that of the less interested pseudo-mystics. See, for example, his treatment of the "Faustian" theme (pp. 81-83); while the scientist may be destroyed, the reader is not given to believe that the search for knowledge is wicked, but that it is desirable. To quote a savant from "Earth Minus," "it is better that the mind seek knowledge and die than to lie fallow and live."

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HEINLEIN IN DIMENSION

Part V · Content

by Alexei Panshin

1. Meaning

Almost any story has an obvious surface meaning revealed in action. Hamlet, for instance, is a prince whose uncle has him murdered when the uncle discovers that his crimes have been found out, except that Hamlet is able to take all the bad guys with him when he goes. Beneath the surface of Hamlet, however, are other meanings, both overt and hidden, and it is these that give the story and other complex fiction more interest for a reader than, say, is held by a Nancy Drew thriller or the Bobbsey Twins. These additional meanings illuminate the obvious surface. The bodies on the stage at the end of Hamlet are more than just a way of keeping score so that the spectator can see which side came out ahead.

Meaning that was consciously intended by the writer generally is accessible on one reading. A character named Gradgrind points a direction. So does the colour of a white whale. Unconscious meaning, however, is more difficult. The only method of arriving at it that I know is through those symbols and ideas that a writer chooses to keep repeating.

In this chapter, my intention is to discuss two repeated Heinlein themes and a repeated character and then to tie them together. The themes are liberty and libertarianism, and the unreality of the world. The character is the Heinlein Individual. I mean to discuss each of these at some length and then to show that together they make up a strain of emotional solipsism that so thoroughly permeates Heinlein's fiction that I am left no choice but to believe that it is one aspect of the man himself.

2. Liberty

From the very beginning of his writing career, liberty has been a favourite Heinlein subject. If This Goes On, Heinlein's first novel, is about a revolution fought against an authoritarian government. Heinlein's second novel, Sixth Column, is about a revolution against an authoritarian invader. Heinlein has written other novels about colonies winning their freedom and about wars fought to defend freedom against implacable invaders. The theme is a constant one.

Beyond this, however, Heinlein's stories are filled with strongly worded statements in favour of free-wheeling, far-reaching personal freedom:

"Requiem": "It's neither your business, nor the business of this damn paternalistic government, to tell a man not to risk his life doing what he really wants to do."

Beyond This Horizon: "The private life and free action of every individual must be scrupulously respected."

The Puppet Masters: "The price of freedom is the willingness to do sudden battle, anywhere, any time and with utter recklessness."

Most Heinlein stories yield similar statements--in his early stories in the statements of his characters; in his recent fiction in blunt, like-it-or-lump-it editorial opinion. As can be seen from the quotes given above, Heinlein's idea of what liberty amounts to is wolfish and thorough-going. To a certain extent Heinlein has always been at war with himself as to which aspect of his libertarianism would predominate. One example, particularly interesting for the manner in which Heinlein reversed himself, can be found in If This Goes On.

In the original version of the story, the narrator writes as follows:

If we could capture New Jerusalem, there would then be time and opportunity to change the psychological conditioning of the people and make them aware that they really had been saved from a tyranny which had ruled by keeping them in ignorance, their minds chained.

The plan concocted by Colonel Novak and Zebediah provided for readjusting the people to freedom of thought and freedom of action. They planned nothing less than mass reorientation under hypnosis. The technique was simple, as simple as works of genius usually are. They had prepared a film which was a mixture of history, theological criticism, simple course in general science, exposition of the philosophy of the scientific viewpoint and frame of mind, and so forth. Taken consciously, it was too much to soak up in one dose, but they planned to use it on subjects in a state of light hypnosis.

Here, of course, the wolfishness predominates--like Deacon Ashrat of Pogo who means to have peace even if he has to ram it down people's bloodthirsty throats, Heinlein's people are going to dispense liberty even if they have to brainwash people into accepting it.

In the revised and expanded version of the story, however, Heinlein brings all his heavy guns to bear on his former position and destroys it completely. The movie is still present in the story in an even more convincing and overwhelming form but this time around Novak and Zeb Jones, both sympathetic characters, are not responsible for it. In this version, it was put together by an unsympathetic, eager-beaver underling against Novak's recommendation. Heinlein intensifies the original situation by having the eager-beaver say happily,

"This film, used with the preparatory technique and possibly in some cases with a light dose of one of the hypnotic drugs, can be depended on to produce an optimum political temperament in 83% of the populace."

But Heinlein then destroys the position. An elderly man whom the narrator likens in appearance to Mark Twain stands up and begins to speak:

"I have a brother, as good a man as I am, but we haven't spoken in many years--because he is honestly devout in the established faith and he suspects me of heresy. Now this cub, with his bulging forehead and his whirling lights, would 'condition' my brother to make him 'politically reliable.' Free men aren't 'conditioned'! Free men are free because they are ornery and cussed and prefer to arrive at their own prejudices in their own way--not have them spoonfed by a self-appointed mind tinkerer! We haven't fought, our brethren haven't bled and died, just to change bosses, no matter how sweet their motives."

And then to add punctuation, Heinlein has this old man drop dead just before the vote is taken on whether or not to use the film. The vote, of course, is not to use it.

Heinlein not only has a taste for free men, but for free societies as well. In Beyond This Horizon and in "Coventry" he presents two specifically libertarian societies, the sort of contexts in which every man can operate as freely as one can imagine under any government. Neither is perfect, or even perfectly imagined--not surprising when you consider the complexity and internal contradictions present in modern society--but both are very interesting.

There is a strong element of wolfishness present again in Beyond This Horizon. The social insurance of mutual respect of rights is the necessity to defend one's conduct with a gun. Theoretically, this means that the ordinary person will be polite and mind his own business lest he be challenged for his behavior. The flaw, of course, is that the man with a fast finger on the trigger would be forgiven conduct that another man would be held to account for. On the other hand, I'm not completely sure that Heinlein would regard this as a flaw.

In the world of "Coventry," social insurance is the Covenant. The judge who sentences the protagonist to Coventry gives a full account of what the Covenant is:



"The Covenant is not a superstition, but a simple temporal contract entered into by those same revolutionists for pragmatic reasons. They wished to insure the maximum possible liberty for every person. You yourself have enjoyed that liberty. No possible act, nor mode of conduct, was forbidden to you, as long as your action did not damage another. You complain that our way of living is dull and unromantic, and imply that we have deprived you of excitement to which you feel entitled. You are free to hold and express your esthetic opinion of our way of living, but you must not expect us to live to suit your tastes. You are free to seek danger and adventure if you wish--there is danger still in experimental laboratories; there is hardship in the mountains of the Moon, and death in the jungles of Venus--but you are not free to expose us to the violence of your nature."

Granted that we have a very exact idea of what damaging another person constitutes--and the ultimate definition might include simple breathing--this seems at least a fair statement of the aims of a libertarian society.

It seems to me that there are three ways in which a character with freedom of action can operate. He can operate within the framework of society, whether or not he is in full accord with it. He can reject society and strike out on his own. Or he can arbitrarily run society to suit himself. Heinlein has written of characters who do each of these things.

The hero of Beyond This Horizon is a perfect example of the first mode. He is a strong man, dissatisfied with both himself and his society, but when it is suggested to him that he join a revolution and change things to suit himself, he doesn't even consider the idea for a moment. He is too much a part of his society to reject it. Instead he achieves his aims by getting the society to agree to try things his way. The hero of Double Star, who becomes a professional politician, is another example, and so even is Harriman (the man who finances the first two trips to the Moon), who, though he may come within a hairsbreadth of illegality, always plays by the rules of society. In the same way, the hero of Tunnel in the Sky helps to found a society and then is treated shabbily by it, but nonetheless resists the suggestion of leaving the society and striking out on his own.

Heinlein has written three times of the man who finds freedom in rejecting society, in "Waldo," in "Coventry," and in Farnham's Freehold. In the first two cases Heinlein's point is that the central characters are wrong in rejecting society.

Waldo, if you will recall, is a genius affected by a degenerative muscle disease who lives in a satellite home popularly known as "Wheelchair." That isn't Waldo's own name for it. He calls it "Freehold," and fondly thinks that while he is there he is not involved in what happens on Earth: "I have no interest in such troubles; I'm independent of such things." His mentor goes to considerable length to point out to him that he is not independent, that "Freehold" would not exist at all without society and society's technology. And Waldo ultimately forsakes his "independence" in order to take a place in normal society.

The point of "Coventry," too, is that the rugged individualist is not quite so much his own man as he believes that he is. Heinlein points this out directly. He says,

The steel tortoise gave Mackinnon a feeling of Crusoe-like independence. It did not occur to him that his chattel was the end product of the cumulative effort and intelligent co-operation of hundreds of thousands of men, living and dead.

And Heinlein spends more than a page elaborating this moral.

Perhaps one measure of the change in Heinlein in recent years is that Farnham's Freehold seriously sets forth the point of view that "Waldo" and "Coventry" reject. Hugh Farnham, as far as we can see, does not and will not function within modern society; his reaction to it is to dig a hole in the ground to hide in. And then just as Waldo had his "Freehold," Farnham has his, kept independent of the rest of the world by mines, wire, and rifle bullets. It is an odd sort of freedom.

In "Lost Legacy" and in "Gulf" Heinlein's characters make decisions for society by themselves and then enforce their decisions. In "Lost Legacy" the "enemy" is

...the antagonists of human liberty, of human dignity--the racketeers, the crooked political figures, the shysters, the dealers in phony religions, the sweat-shoppers, the petty authoritarians, all of the key figures among the traffickers in human misery and human oppression, themselves somewhat adept in the arts of the mind, and acutely aware of the danger of free knowledge--all of this unholy breed.

The good guys save society by deciding who the bad guys are and disposing of them.

In "Gulf" the sides are just as clearly drawn.

"Some one must be on guard if the race is to live; there is no one but us. To guard effectively we New Men must be organized, must never fumble any crisis like this--and must increase our numbers. We are few now, Joe; as the crises increase, we must increase to meet them. Eventually--and it's a dead race with time--we must take over and make certain that baby never plays with matches.

"I confess to that same affection for democracy, Joe, but it's like yearning for the Santa Claus you believed in as a child. For a hundred and fifty years or so democracy, or something like it, could flourish safely. The issues were such as to be settled without disaster by the votes of common men, befogged and ignorant as they were. But now, if the race is to stay alive, political decisions depend on real knowledge of such things as nuclear physics, planetary ecology, genetic theory, even system mechanics. They aren't up to it, Joe. With goodness and more will than they possess less than one in a thousand could stay awake over one page of nuclear physics; they can't learn what they must know."

The answer is clear as to what course the "New Men" must take:

"Joe, didn't you ever feel a yen to wipe out some evil, obscene, rotten jerk who infected everything he touched, yet was immune to legal action? We treat them as cancers; we excise them from the body social. We keep a 'Better Dead' list; when a man is clearly morally bankrupt we close his account at the first opportunity."

This again is a wolfish sort of freedom.

It is passages such as these that I've just quoted from "Lost Legacy" and "Gulf" that caused me to think for a time that Heinlein was an authoritarian; but he is not. His characters ask no one to follow them and obey them except from choice. Even the subordinates in Heinlein's military stories are always volunteers.

The judge in "Coventry" says to David MacKinnon:

"But your psychometrical tests show that you believe yourself capable of judging morally your fellow citizens and feel justified in personally correcting and punishing their lapses...From a social standpoint, your delusion makes you mad as the March Hare."

If you allow the possibility of doubt as to their inborn rightness, the characters of "Gulf" and "Lost Legacy" are not sane. But they are not authoritarians.

Heinlein's characters are not democrats, either, as witness the quotation above from "Gulf" or the following passage from Glory Road:

"Democracy can't work. Mathematicians, peasants, and animals, that's all there is--so democracy, a theory based on the assumption that mathematicians and peasants are equal, can never work. Wisdom is not additive; its maximum is that of the wisest man in a given group."

Since Heinlein writes about the wisest and most competent men that he can imagine, he doesn't even expect them to be democrats, and I can't think of any who are. Double Star, for instance, the most democratic of Heinlein's stories, ends on a paternalistic, God-bless-the-little-people note:

But there is a solemn satisfaction in doing the best you can for eight billion people. Perhaps their lives have no cosmic significance, but they have feelings. They can hurt.

What Heinlein is, of course, is an elitist. Not only are his central characters Heinlein Individuals, and hence special, but Heinlein most often assigns his lead characters uncommon talents that set them even further apart. The hero of The Puppet Masters has a camera eye; the hero of Citizen of the Galaxy has an eidetic memory; the hero of Glory Road can unfailingly orient himself; the heroes of "Misfit" and Starman Jones are lightning calculators; the hero of Time for the Stars is a telepath; the hero of Stranger in a Strange Land can do almost anything with mind alone. Heinlein's elite is one of competence rather than of money or blood, and these special talents, by increasing competence, are added reason for the existence of the elite. In "Lost Legacy," these super powers are the single characteristic of the elite.

And, of course, when the case for the right of the elite to rule is made, it is generally, as in "Gulf," made on the basis of competence. Competence proves itself.

Heinlein carries his elitism beyond individual characters to man as an animal. He has a set piece--that Man is the most ravenous, intolerant, deadly and successful of the animals in the explored universe--which he has presented as a given at least five times: in The Puppet Masters, Tunnel in the Sky, Starman Jones, Starship Troopers, and in his prediction article in the April 1956 Amazing Stories, where it is stated as an idea that will eventually be generally accepted.

In Starship Troopers the notion is editorially presented as a problem in morality. Does Man have the right to breed his way across the Universe, filling it to the brim? The answer is that we will find out. If we get slapped down, then we didn't have the right. In other words, what can be gotten away with is "right." Following the same thought, the female lead in Glory Road is head of the Twenty Universes just as long as her competence keeps her alive; until then her decisions are right. They are automatically carried out because she is acknowledged to be more competent than everybody else. Someday she will be assassinated and then, because she is dead, she will be wrong, just as Man will be wrong if some other race knocks him off. This elitism, then, is the source of Heinlein's wolfishness. The fast-gun morality of Beyond This Horizon is acceptable--no, desirable--because it allows competence the chance to demonstrate itself.

Actually, being four-square for liberty is a very easy and comfortable thing in the abstract. In practice, however, there arise two other questions: "Liberty for whom?" and "Liberty to do what?" Heinlein's stories are varied enough so that a final answer is not possible to either question that does not allow an exception to be produced. However, it is my feeling that the importance of liberty to Heinlein comes in relation to his competent men; they require freedom to become fully themselves. Freedom for the man who cannot stay awake over a page of nuclear physics is less important than for the man with the quick mind and the quick gun simply because the first man is less capable of doing anything with freedom were he to have it. In other words freedom is the Heinlein Individual's right to do as he pleases.

3. The Heinlein Individual

To an extent, the chief characters of any writer are likely to resemble their creator. As the character is the child of his creator, he resembles him. As a writer assigns his own opinions, attitudes, and interests to a sympathetic character, so the character is likely to sound like him. This does not happen in the case of every man who writes, but it isn't uncommon in the case of a writer like Heinlein who has a distinct point of view to sell, and it is to this extent that I believe the Heinlein Individual resembles Heinlein himself.

The Heinlein Individual has three central characteristics: his strength, his singularity, and his ability to teach himself.

All three stages of the Heinlein Individual are strong and competent. The youngest stage may be ignorant and naive but that is an accident of youth and not a character deficiency. Young Andrew Jackson Libby, the protagonist of Heinlein's second story, "Misfit," is an example: he is innocent and ignorant, but at the same time he is bright, has a special talent (lightning calculation), and is both eager to learn and eager to please.

The naiveté of the first stage Heinlein Individual leads him into error from which he is commonly extracted by his competence after he learns what he has to know. This makes him ripe for a "Man-Who-Learned-Better" situation. John Lyle, who learns that the Prophet is not above question in If This Goes On .., is one example and so is Don Harvey, the young hero of Between Planets, who learns that there are times when political neutrality is not possible.

Since the first stage Heinlein Individual is so often a sheep ripe for shearing, Heinlein has almost always provided him with a mentor in the form of an older Heinlein Individual. Michael Smith of Stranger in a Strange Land might well serve as an example of the supreme innocent--he has been brought up by Martians and knows nothing about human ways--and he has Jubal Harshaw, a man who is a doctor, a lawyer, and a popular writer, in short a man who knows all the essential things about human ways, to serve as his tutor. In the same way, Don Harvey falls under the wing of cynical old Dr. Jefferson, a Thorby has his Colonel Basim, and John Lyle has Zeb Jones.

Zeb Jones, "the wiseacre without whom no Heinlein story is complete," to quote Damon Knight, is an archtypical second stage Heinlein Individual, the competent man in full bloom. This stage is less eager, more cynical, more likely to make a wisecrack than to rush out to save the world. The cynicism, no doubt, is the result of the destroyed past illusions of a former first stage Heinlein Individual. Jones himself is a master psychologist, master fencer, master of palace politics; he knows everything that his protege, Lyle, needs to learn.

In the same way, in Starman Jones, young Jones is taken in hand by Sam Anderson, who wipes his nose, gets Jones's appearance changed, procures false papers for them both, tutors Jones, and sneaks him aboard a starship. And Anderson knows his way around a starship well enough to keep Jones from suffering for his ignorance. Anderson even dies while rescuing Jones from trouble he has fallen into.

Perhaps the best description of the abilities of the second stage Heinlein Individual comes from Beyond This Horizon: "I could set you down on an island peopled by howling savages and dangerous animals--in two weeks you would own the place... You've got the physique and the mentality and the temperament."

The third stage Heinlein Individual, perhaps because he has lost his energy, perhaps simply because he has lived longer, is even more cynical:

"My dear, I used to think I was serving humanity... and I pleased in the thought. Then I discovered that humanity does not want to be served; on the contrary it resents any attempt to serve it. So now I do what pleases Jubal Harshaw."

The major difference, however, between a Zeb Jones and a Colonel Dubois is that a Jones knows how things work, while a Dubois knows why, as well. This makes him an even more effective mentor, and this is the role a third stage Heinlein Individual most often takes. Jubal Harshaw, the mentor of Michael Smith, the human Martian, is the one human who knows enough to explain things to Smith and, moreover, is the one human who knows enough to "grok the fullness" without knowing Martian.

This third stage serves as mentor not only to his young innocent counterpart but to his knowledgeable second stage self as well. For instance, the head of the super-secret intelligence organisation in The Puppet Masters is both father and mentor to the book's narrator, who is his chief agent. In "Waldo," Waldo is given advice by old Dr. Grimes, the one person he will listen to.

This continuing mentorship even forms a chain in several books, third stage lecturing second stage, and then second stage passing on advice to first stage. Beyond This Horizon is one example. The third stage is Mordan Claude, District Moderator for Genetics and wise old man, who regularly counsels the novel's chief character, Hamilton Felix. Hamilton (the man with the physique, mentality and temperament to rule that wild island) in turn serves as advisor to his friend, Monroe Clifford-Alpha, who is an innocent, for all his competence as an economist, and needs to be kept out of trouble.

There are, of course, clear intermediate examples of Heinlein individuals. The narrator of Farmer in the Sky is not naive enough to be called a pure stage one, and his friend and sometime-mentor, Hank Jones, is not quite knowing or cynical enough to be a pure stage two. Roger Stone of The Rolling Stones and Hugh Farnham of Farnham's Freehold seem to fall somewhere in between stage two and stage three.

More than this, however, in two Heinlein stories we are given a view of a single character at all three stages -- and one serving as mentor to himself in full view, besides. The stories are "By His Bootstraps" and "...All You Zombies," both time travel stories.

In "By His Bootstraps," the hero, Bob Wilson, finds himself counseled by successive older selves, from slightly-more-knowlegeable to wise-old-man-who-knows-both-how-and-why. Then, he himself inevitably acts out the roles he has already witnessed.

"...All You Zombies" is more sophisticated and, in fact, very neatly symbolizes all the points we have considered. The first stage ego of the story is a young girl, competent, ambitious but innocent. The second stage (male) knows how the world wags but not why. He passes through time to meet his former female self and initiate her sexually, thereby ending her innocence. (And a more explicit sort of mentorship I can't imagine.) The third stage ego, much older, knows why things have happened as they have. In his role as mentor he makes what has come before possible, including the ending of the innocence of his first self by his second, including his own birth.

If there is one wish that all men have had at one time or another, it is that they might be able to go back and avoid the mistakes they once made and so save themselves a lot of pain. Heinlein has the perfect way to do this: his Individual, no matter the number of different guises he appears in, is one single character who quite conveniently serves as teacher to himself. In this way the man who has learned better can alert his naive self and save him the cost of his mistakes. The world may have to be tied into knots to allow the Heinlein Individual to prevail, but that is quite all right since he is the single, solitary real thing in an essentially unreal world. The world exists for him, not he for the world.

4. Unreality

Sheer continued existence seems to be something that is tremendously important to Heinlein, and a guarantee of it a necessary reassurance. His character, Hamilton Felix in Beyond This Horizon, for instance, takes the promise of life after death in the form of reincarnation as the only thing that gives life any point. The form of continued existence does vary, however, from one story to the next.

The easiest way is for his characters simply not to die. In Tunnel in the Sky suspended animation is used to keep a dying man alive long enough for techniques to save him to be developed, and this same suspended animation

is brought into several other stories. Methuselah's Children is about nothing else than length of life: extension of it first by breeding for longevity and then by purely medical means. A psychological need for the postponement of death seems to grip the characters in the story to the point of monomania, as though the calm acceptance of death were not possible. One character, in fact, having lived about two hundred years and feeling death impending, chooses to give up her individuality and become part of a group mind simply to be able to avoid extinction.

In "Elsewhen," a Heinlein character says (supplying his own italics),

"When you die, you won't die all over, no matter how intensely you may claim to expect to. It is an emotional impossibility for any man to believe in his own death."

So, admitting the possibility of death of a sort, Heinlein has mitigated it in several ways. Ghosts are one way--they linger on and in lingering deny the finality of death. The only flaw is that the power of the ghost to influence things through his continued existence is severely limited, so when Heinlein has introduced ghosts, they have been Martian ghosts (in Red Planet and Stranger in a Strange Land) rather than human ones.

Another way Heinlein has found of mitigating death is reincarnation, which, of course, does allow for effective action beyond death and so is suitable for Heinlein individuals. Heinlein makes reincarnation an important minor thread of Beyond This Horizon, but his use of it in Stranger in a Strange Land is more revealing: in that story Martians become ghosts but human worthies become angels and may be reincarnated as well.

As important as this denial of the reality of death is, however, just as important is a denial of the reality of the world, the only thing that can make the first denial meaningful. It is by his singular ability to transcend the bounds of the world that the Heinlein Individual demonstrates his difference from other humans. For instance, Waldo, in the story named after him, is able to make the world what he wants it to be by simply thinking it so and forcing his idea on everyone else. Similarly, in "Elsewhen" it is possible for the protagonist to leave this world and travel to any number of other aspects of reality by thinking proper thoughts. It is by success that the Heinlein Individual reveals himself, including success in Heinlein's brand of transcendentalism.

With this in mind, it is interesting to look at the only quotation from Shakespeare that to my knowledge Heinlein has used in any of his stories. The quotation is even more interesting since Heinlein has introduced it no less than four times--in Between Planets, Double Star, Have Space Suit--Will Travel, and Farnham's Freehold. The speech is from The Tempest and in full goes:

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve;
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

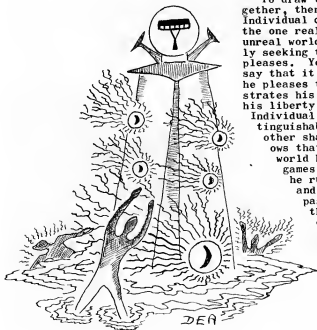
This, of course, is a flat denial of the reality of the world. It is interesting, moreover, that for all that Heinlein has quoted from the passage, he has not quoted from the last sentence. In other words, he is quite willing to chalk off the world but people are not quite so easily disposed of. In fact, at the time of its use in Have Space Suit--Will Travel, there is a threat that our world will be destroyed: the story protagonist--who has just quoted from the above--says, apparently against all logic: "All right, take away our star--You will if you can and I guess you can. Go ahead! We'll make a star! Then, someday, we'll come back and hunt you down--all of you!" In other words, the world may end, but wolfish men will survive.

The ultimately "real" Heinlein Individual, however, is the solipsist. A solipsist is a person who starts as Descartes did, with "I think, therefore I am," and then is unable to go further. He knows that he is, that he exists, but is not sure that the rest of us think and so is forced to doubt our reality; the world then becomes the conscious or unconscious product of the solipsist himself, the only real thing that exists. Heinlein played with the notion in Beyond This Horizon (which, remember, also deals with reincarnation). In this story it is suggested that the world is a game and all the characters of the story pieces in the game, some of them automatic and some not: "You locked up your memory, and promised not to look, then played through the part you had picked with just the rules assigned to that player."

Solipsism forms the more serious core of the short stories, "...All You Zombies" and "They," as well. In these stories the central point is not just that the main characters are solipsists--not so strange, since many solipsists have lived and died since the world began--but that their solipsism is justified. They are, in fact, the points around which all the universe revolves.

A quotation from the central character of "They" may serve to sum up the essence of all Heinlein Individuals who outlive their worlds: "Second only to the prime datum of my own existence [I think, therefore I am.] is the emotionally convincing certainty of my own continuity. I may be a closed curve, but closed or open, I neither have a beginning nor an end. Self-awareness is not relational; it is absolute and cannot be reached to be destroyed, or created." It does not matter too much how, but the Heinlein Individual always goes on existing...

5. Import



To draw the threads together, then, the Heinlein Individual can be seen as the one real thing in an unreal world, quite naturally seeking to do as he pleases. You might even say that it is by doing as he pleases that he demonstrates his reality. Without his liberty, the Heinlein Individual becomes indistinguishable from the other shades and shadows that inhabit the world he plays his games in; with it he rules his worlds and survives their passing. And this is an indication of the basis as well as the limits of both Heinlein's elitism and his libertarianism.

Stranger in a Strange Land demonstrates every one of the points that I have made. All men in this story are not equal. Some are real and some are not. The unreal ones are children of this world and perish with it; the real ones live after and added together form the only god there is. The theme of the book is, "All that groks is God," groking being the ultimate understanding of why things are as they are and Jubal Harshaw, the wise-old-man Heinlein Individual, being the ultimate example of one who groks. If you extrapolate this set to cover all of Heinlein's fiction and understand that the Heinlein Individual, no matter what story he is in, always groks, then the point I'm drawing should be clear.

"It is an emotional impossibility" -- Heinlein says -- "for any man to believe in his own death." I doubt very strongly that this is true, but I suspect that it is true of Heinlein himself, who has, at the least, much in common with his Heinlein Individual. I suspect, too, that on an emotional level, Heinlein may be sure of his own abilities and suspicious of the abilities of the ordinary man. To this extent, I would call him an emotional solipsist. Intellectually he may still question, but his emotional inclinations, as demonstrated in story after story, are set.

In view of this, Farnham's Freehold takes on added interest. In this story, although the Heinlein Individual retains his competence he does not succeed. He is frustrated at every turn. Far from transcending the universe, he is subject to its whims, being flicked willy-nilly through time and from situation to situation, through all of which he remains essentially powerless. The Individual, Hugh Farnham, speaks continually of freedom and liberty, which, as usual, can be taken to mean the opportunity to do as he pleases. And the story as a whole can be taken as the search on Farnham's part for the simple situation that other Heinlein Individuals have had as a matter of course -- a universe in which to be God. That universe, when he does find it and surrounds it with mines and barbed wire to keep it inviolate, is such a constricted pea patch as to be almost a symbol of failure. The story itself may symbolize the failure of Heinlein's long-held belief in the ability of the competent man to prevail eternally. If that belief truly has been lost, I cannot say what will follow: perhaps the end of the Heinlein Individual.

LANDSCAPE

The bluff,
like this:
stamps its heel
down into the sea,
spatters surf
(I wonder, do you know)
gulls fly, flee,
screaming

--James Castle

the seasonal fan

BY

Jim Harmon

the new radio game

I am, to my best belief, the world's first professional Old Time Radio fan.

Forrest J. Ackerman, as everyone knows, is the world's first professional science fiction fan, and there didn't seem much room for crowding that particular profession. Yet, unconsciously, Ackerman must have given me the impetus for my own unique calling.

Candidly, my profession has not been my sole source of support since its inception, about 1960. In that time I have also written science fiction, sex novels, screenplays; edited a monster movie magazine (I steal a lot of ideas from Ackerman); and during one really lush period of a few months sold newspaper subscriptions by telephone. Nevertheless, it seems more often than not my radio fanning represented my livelihood, particularly for the last three of four years.

Old Time Radio Fandom is certainly not large or well-organized. There had been a few radio articles in the science fiction fan press -- my own "Some Radio Fantasy" in Fantasy Commentator in 1948 (written when I was twelve years old), followed by articles on the highly fantastic I Love a Mystery series by the now Noreen Shaw in F.A.P.A. and my article in my own publication, Harmon's, coincidentally just before Noreen's, and just after hers another by me in Redd Boggs's Retrograde. More recently there have been nostalgic articles in professional magazines, including Playboy, by Charles Beaumont, Jean Shepherd, and others.

Radiohero, my fanzine devoted to the subject, has seen three issues and even after a year off may see more. It is the first fan publication to be devoted entirely to radio (science fiction, fantasy, and otherwise).

Other publications, often in comic book fandom, today occasionally offer radio articles, though usually inexperienced ones (except when written by me, of course). These generally comic book or movie fanzines with radio articles include Don Glut's Shazam and John Cooper's Hero-Hobby. Only Cooper is active and enthusiastic, but as he admits, his contributions are only "typed," not "written." They are fun, and if even more free-form might be recognised as avant-garde genius.

It was through Radiohero and its review in Life Magazine that I took in a lot of subscription monies, much of which I had to return to people who had never before seen a fanzine.

But even before Radiohero I was in the profitable stage of radio collecting, that is, collecting recordings of actual radio programs. I once felt such recordings to be excruciatingly rare, but now I am beginning to think the entire surface of the Earth is covered in old radio transcriptions to a depth of three and a half feet. These recordings are available from old radio producers, actors, old record shops, and from people who have tape recordings they recorded off the air or obtained from one of the other listed sources.

There is a great deal of trading of such tapes among the handful of collectors. There are occasional sales of tapes or disc recordings.

Technically, such sales of recordings may be called "piracy." The original actors or producers don't benefit. Yet the recordings no longer have any commercial application, since they are from incomplete serials or incomplete episodes, with not enough left for commercial play on the air, if one could find a station that would run them in place of rock 'n' roll and unlimited commercials. The few dollars collectors charge is only a small labour charge for their time in making up the custom recording.

I've never failed to keep from circulating recordings if such request was made by the radio personality who gave them to me. But most such people are flattered to be remembered and still appreciated.

Everything aside, I know of two major networks on the North American continent that have been willing to pay a collector modest fees for supplying them recordings to be used in documentaries. It was never a large business, but it has helped pay the rent a few times. Today, such sales are about non-existent since that nuclear word "proliferation" has occurred. Too many people have too much. Trades still go on. Yes, major networks have traded recordings with me. (They junked 99% of their own recordings before they realised they might need them again after TV.)

This aspect of radio collecting -- and certainly I've always collected for my own pleasure, primarily -- and the publication of my fanzine, Radiohero, represented the more amateur aspects of my career as (hopefully) Number One Radio Fan.

I felt I was being just a bit more professional -- even though I wasn't paid for it -- when I began a series on a real radio station, KPFFK-FM, Los Angeles, and on other stations of the Pacifica Foundation chain. The show was called Radio Rides Again, and featured my spoken narration about old time radio and excerpts of various old radio shows, which may be used in such documentaries where no profit is involved for anyone. It was a good series, I think. The Longines Symphonette organization thought so too. Somewhere, they taped it off the air, edited, rearranged (and technically improved) the excerpts, added a very few others, and replaced my narration with that of an upstart named Jack Benny. They want \$15 for the six L.P. set. Naturally, they consulted me no more than I had consulted Joe Penner.

Radio Rides Again led to other things, including another Pacifica network show of mine called Pop Art Review on which I interviewed such notables as Kris Neville on science fiction and Arthur Jean Cox on the works of Charles Dickens. Moreover, it even led to some radio work for which I was paid -- being a consultant to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for various TV and radio programs involving nostalgic radio.

Slightly before this, I had another professional endeavour in radio fandom. Through the Life article I was contacted by Jeremy P. Tarcher about doing a hardcover book on radio. Tarcher is a book producer, who produces a book much in the manner Alfred Hitchcock might produce a film to be released by M-G-M. Tarcher is a young, understanding man; and his work as editor is so exactly compatible, incisive, and brilliant he makes every other editor I have worked with look -- ahem-- "poor" in comparison. Working on an advance commission, I was for the first time in my life able to write something I wanted to write with the knowledge I wouldn't starve to death before it was finished.

So for the year and a half it took to write the book, I was again living off of being a radio fan.

Now, finally and definitely, Doubleday has signed to release J.P. Tarcher's production and Jim Harmon's lifeblood under the non-definite title, The Great Radio Heroes. A little more advance, and I am once again living off the radio waves emanating from the past.

However, I do not see an unlimited future in my profession. I am thinking of writing Science Fiction, Westerns, Gothic Romances, even going to work (not as a telephone solicitor.

However, you can probably see through my little ruse. I can tell. You realise that I just don't want competition in the lush career of being an Old Time Radio fan.

Selected Letters

Box 761 Portales
New Mexico 88130

Dear Leland:

Thanks for RQ II: 3.

I enjoyed it, from Schneeman cover to the editorial. Though I commonly skip the fiction, the Bretnor story is effective and the Fox story perhaps even memorable. The Panshin articles, however, I have read with growing disappointment and disagreement. Though he has offered useful insights into Heinlein, I feel that he is often wrong.

At the outset, I was inclined to agree that Heinlein's third period shows an artistic decline. In the course of a careful rereading of Stranger in a Strange Land, for a course I teach in science fiction, I've begun to change my mind. When we put this novel in the tradition of great science fiction satires, along with Swift's Gulliver's Travels and Wells's First Men in the Moon and Huxley's Brave New World, the class seemed to agree with me that it could hold its place as a worthy member of the group.

In this third period, Heinlein is shifting away from adventure and escape to place more emphasis on theme. Though this sort of change is likely to offend readers looking only for story interest, Heinlein's basic themes have been pretty much the same all along, and, at least in Stranger, he gives them an effective and significant statement.

His treatment of sex in this novel, though it shocks some readers, is more symbolic than realistic. Obviously but powerfully, it is symbolic of "brotherly" love. I can't help feeling that Panshin, on Heinlein and sex, is both inadequate and unfair.

It seems unfair to blame Heinlein for accepting--at least in his early stories--the conventions enforced by his editors and his audience. It is ironic, because Heinlein has always objected to those same conventions. One of his old quarrels with John Campbell was that Campbell would not publish any adult treatment of sex.

Though opinions would differ about what is an adult treatment of sex, I think any discussion of sex in science fiction would require a far broader study--which might go back as far as Plato's opinion that sexual passion, like poetry, is a dangerous enemy to reason and social stability.

Anyhow, the curiously unrealistic treatment of sex in American science fiction is no sin of Heinlein's alone. It's a symptom of the whole field, and I suspect that it would make a rewarding subject for psychoanalytic study.

I have no quarrel with your own comments on my "thought-variant" stories except to say that you are attempting to judge them by standards that did not exist, either for me or for most readers of science fiction, when they were written. It is somewhat like indicting a cannibal for operating without the approval of a meat inspector from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

With all the best,

Jack Williamson

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For me the physical love in Heinlein's novel symbolizes, in gross material terms, the author's notion of mystical "knowledge," whereby the knower "groks" (unites with) the thing known. This would place our author not in the satirical tradition of Jonathan Swift, but in the occult tradition of Madame Blavatsky--for mystical "knowledge" bears no semblance to cognition, which presupposes a distinction between observer and observed. (For details see RQ II, 76-77.) In Santayana's phrase, knowledge is "a salutation, not an embrace."

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915 W. Hazelhurst
Ferndale, Michigan 48220

Dear Leland & associates,

Am grateful for the "skeleton" issue received and resolved to attempt a modest reciprocation. Of particular interest was the segment of Alexei Panshin's "Heinlein In Dimension." An irksome criticism of Mr. Heinlein's forbearance to portray an authentic inter-sexual relation must, in panorama, be admissible with reservations. It being unambiguous to assert that from his earlier writings, Mr. Heinlein avoided sex as readily as a eunuch in a harem, must not consideration also be shown towards the various environments in which our so-inferred hormone-imbalanced heroes find themselves? Envisage Hugh Hoyland of Universe and Common Sense, who shocks a fellow pansy at the outset with his "ruthless" malediction, sly and serene, locked in the passionate arms of Edris Baxter. T'would not only be out of character for this lacklust-Hugh but contradictory to the seeming anti-synergism factor displayed in the story line. (Am I right?) Hugh and troop were portrayed as simpletons or puritans. Either they didn't know the score of the game or they avoided such "unthinkable corruptions" and left them with the other skeletons in the closet. All in all a definite case of warped mores. Mr. Heinlein's specialty is the projection of intricate plausible societies. With meticulous care he will create a completely logical and believable ecology. Mr. Panshin, I think, shouldn't generalize his criticisms of the customary central character without considering first the hypothetical environment in which the individual is found. All very vital and relative say I...

thanks again,

J. Matthew Venable

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Mr. Panshin's more complete argument, which our correspondent had not yet seen, was that sexual inhibitions are shown even by members of the author's non-puritanical societies. This, in turn, must be qualified by Mr. Williamson's observation that depiction of uninhibited sexual behavior would have been considered too naughty for the readers of Astounding.

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361 Roseville Ave.
Newark, New Jersey 07107

Dear Leland:

...You are succeeding in putting together a serious journal. I agree with your summation that it was a superb story "scent" rather than thought variants that formed the basis of Tremaine's success, but the excitement generated by the thought-variants served his purpose just as well as if they had been classics. They got people to read the magazine, and even if they didn't like the thought variants there was usually something else they would like. In addition to Stanley G. Weinbaum and Don A. Stuart Tremaine was getting remarkable work out of Harry Bates, Raymond Z. Gallun, Thomas Calvert McClary, Harl Vincent, Donald Wandrei, Jack Williamson, Murray Leinster, Not Schachner, Henry J. Kosmos and even John Russell Fearn. (His "Man Who Stopped the Dust" is almost unique in science fiction and "Before Earth Came a fine, imaginative job for its period.)

Who is Robert Milch? His article intrigued me and I wish he could have supplied more information...Josef Skvorecky...leading authority on Czechoslovakian science fiction [also] gave Stanislaw Lem as the best writer of science fiction behind the iron curtain. I took advantage of our meeting to turn over my Karel Capek article (in Explorers of the Infinite) to take back with him and scrutinize for errors. His advice was particularly desired because he is today, a close friend of the late Capek's wife, who is still living. I was relieved to receive a recent letter from him stating: "You asked me to comment on the chapter on Karel Capek. Well, I can tell you, that it is a piece of first rate information and evaluation--to make a comparison: in this long article there are almost no errors, whereas in the short (a few lines only) article on Capek in the Reader's Encyclopedia by William Rose Benet, there is practically everything wrong."

I have been attempting to restrain myself from comment on Panshin's interminable tedium on Heinlein, since He has let it be known that the greatness of the whole will be instantly ascertainable the instant all segments of it are completed. While I am waiting (remember when we were asked to wait for the meaning of van Vogt's World of A to dawn on us?) let me comment that his analysis of Heinlein's sexual attitudes and propensities through the material in his stories is about the most asinine thing I've ever seen put on paper.

Sincerely yours

Sam Moskowitz

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While agreeing that thought-variants did induce people to buy Tremaine's magazine and so read the better stories in it, I must reject most of Mr. Moskowitz's list, Donald Wandrei, e.g., was, I think, surpassed by his brother, Howard; while Murray Leinster's work for the Street & Smith Astounding sometimes was inferior to what he did in the earlier Clayton magazine. // The worst that can be said is that Mr. Panshin's errors are intelligent errors, whose refutation automatically leads to new insights--as when his remarks on Robert Heinlein and "free love" are replaced by those on Stranger quoted above. Even so, the non-literal character of sex in this novel does not invalidate the critic's evaluations of earlier works.

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151 Calderon Ave. Apt. #341
Mountain View, California 94040

Dear Leland:

You have done such a splendid job with RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY that I regret that my first pertinent letter to you about it has to do with an egregious error in Mr. Robert Milch's article "Science Fiction in Russia Today" page 178. Dr. Isaac Asimov has written, compiled and assembled so many books that it is absurd to ascribe the anthologies SOVIET SCIENCE FICTION and MORE SOVIET SCIENCE FICTION to him. He wrote the introductions to the Collier Books versions since both of these anthologies were translated into English and printed in the English language in the USSR by the Foreign Languages Publishing House and are available from dealers in their original titles of A VISITOR FROM OUTER SPACE and THE HEART OF THE SERPENT. In fairness to Asimov, he has never claimed to be the anthologist but careless writers are doing him this disservice. Otherwise Mr. Milch seems to know his science fiction in the USSR. He neglects to mention the heavy reprinting of Western writers in the USSR (without payment in their own country but with the provision of them coming to the USSR and utilizing their payments there.) I wonder if Collier Books has forwarded any profits to the Russian writers in the above mentioned anthologies?

I agree that if Mr. Sol Cohen is not paying for reprinted stories, he is wrong. However I think there must be complete fairness in these matters. Is Doc Lowndes paying for the many reprints he uses in his magazines? (Of course I mean Lowndes' publisher). Are all the classic reprints used by Don Wollheim fully compensated? Considering all the public domain material now coming out in such torrents, are we to believe in the altruism of everyone of these publishers? The sins of others do not wash out the sins of Sol Cohen but there must be the effort to be fair. I believe that science fiction needs the two magazines FANTASTIC and AMAZING for the original material however slight that now appears in them. The magazine market is far too small for modern writers. There has got to be a place for them to start and to learn. It is too bad that Mr. Cohen has angered people when by a judicious use of sense he could have avoided the present situation. Still if he had been a sensible man, would he have purchased the former Ziff-Davis twins?

It is too bad that it has not been possible to print all parts of Panshin's book about Heinlein in RQ. The more I read of it, the better I like it. Although one of the seven Advent partners, I was never able to read his manuscript. It is strange to think that the one who might have benefited the most by this book, Robert A. Heinlein, will not read it. I was astonished to read Sam Moskowitz's words about Panshin's book in ZENITH SPECULATION. There is so much bad feeling between the two already...that I think a fearful feud is brewing. This is sad since both men are intelligent and are needed by our science fiction field. I think I need take second place to none in being an iconoclastic individual. Yet I try desperately hard to be as objective as I can when it comes to science fiction and its many ramifications. The curse of our field is that we think too little and talk too much.

With highest regards,

Edward Wood

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Mr. Wood calls his shots accurately.// True, there is no payment for works in the Public Domain; however, protection is sought not for the grandchildren of Robert Louis Stevenson but for authors still living and writing. P.D. works excepted, Bob Lowndes pays for all stories; further, he issues no reprints without first asking the author's permission.

Dear Leland,

Robert Milch's piece on Soviet science fiction is quite interesting and informative. As an addendum, you might like to know that various foreign work, including American, is also published in translation. Short stories and novelettes are especially apt to be found in the Terra Phantasia department of the magazine Znaniye-Sila (roughly, "Knowledge Is Power").

Since the USSR does not subscribe to the international copyright convention, such foreign works are appropriated without payment and, usually, without the author's knowledge. In the past, and no doubt in the present, stories with propaganda value are especially apt to be taken, e.g., those which satirize capitalism or dwell on the ill effects of the arms race. Of course, none of the authors ever intended this use of what they wrote. (And I wonder if the effect on the Russian reader may not be an unexpected one, e.g., reminding him that Americans are still free to express what opinions they please.)

There is, however, a brighter side to this situation. First, the Soviet translators and editors are openly somewhat unhappy and apologetic about their government's policy with respect to payment. Their "pen club" promises to make rubles available to any writers they have used who may happen to visit their country. Second -- of rather greater significance -- they are more and more getting away from stories as propaganda. Thus far, to the best of my knowledge, they have not published anything which presents the American side of politics; and that is hardly to be expected. But they do publish straight, nonpolitical American science fiction -- with American or American-like characters in future worlds that don't look especially Marxist -- simply because they like it as science fiction.

The source of my information is principally Efremov (that's how he Romanizes his name) himself, plus a young man who is an economist by profession but a science fiction fan and translator on the side. They got in touch with me because they'd done some of my stories and wanted to know if I could supply more. My agent got indignant, saying that I was in effect being asked to help pirate myself. But what the hell, these were charming pirates; and I'm always interested in making outside contacts; and it was especially amusing that they were publishing as notorious a reactionary as me. So I went along with it, and quite a pleasant correspondence is developing.

I have also been published in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, and in those countries dollar payment is made; not much, but some. Time Patrol seems especially popular in Eastern as well as Western Europe, and it certainly does not forecast anything like a Communist world to come.

Since I am scarcely unique, it might be worth your while, or somebody's, to compile the experiences other writers have had in this area. The total picture might give a small ray of hope -- on the order, perhaps, of the fact that Warsaw now has a Pooh and Piglet Street.

...I won't comment on anything else in your current issue except to say that Janet Fox's Just for Kicks was a fine story that ought to have had professional publication. Let us hope that some anthologist picks it up.

Regards,

Poul Anderson

Mr. Anderson's interesting remarks on Ogre Land are themselves appended, immediately below, by a guided missive from one of its satellites.

65 Friedenstrasse
X 115 Berlin Mahlsdorf 2
East Germany / GDR

Dear Leland,

Many thanks for..."Riverside Quarterly." I'll find your magazine very interesting.

I have the hope that your fanzine will receive me (you must know, our Custom-House does seize most of foreign literature), and so I want to subscribe...

Gladly I would exchange American literature (magazines like "Galaxy," "Worlds of IF," etc.), but I must receive it in common letters only -- no parcels...In exchange I would give German books with science fiction novels. Further I would be very interested in Fanzines like yours, or...smaller fanzines..

With great interest I also have read the article "Science Fiction in Russia Today" by Robert Milch. Yes, Milch knows the Russian SF literature...but I would mean, his sight is a little from one side. It gives...good short stories there, so by Gansovsky, Dneprov and others more. Yes, the Soviet literature isn't the best in the world, but when Robert Milch would know...East German fiction, he must say, that the Russian SF is much better than the East German. In the first issue of my fanzine CASSIOPEIA, which will reach you...through my American friend Chris Gough, who is the publisher, you can find an article "Science fiction - sozialistisch" from myself, in which I try to speak about the SF literature in the GDR (East Germany) and other Eastern countries...The first time it does come out in German language only; I will try to find a fan, who does translate...in English, then it comes out in English language also...

All the best

Siegbert G. Gunzel

Such confiscation behind the Wall is the most frightening thing I've heard since news of the destruction of undesired literature by sheriff's deputies in Los Angeles.// The looser structure of a novel makes it more adaptable than a short story for didactic purposes, be they the inculcation of Marxist principles or anything else, so Mr. Milch's discussion naturally emphasized the long story.

Gymnasistgatan 10B
Malmö S, Sweden

Dear Leland,

RQ still is great, but I don't agree with you when it comes to "Shadow Show." I don't think this is a forbidden-knowledge story at all. Rather it is a study in cosmic irony, and also a rather original twist on an old theme, the idea of literary characters coming to life (like in "Author! Author!" by Asimov). Simak doesn't say that creation of life by men is evil (I mean, he wrote an entire novel on the subject, "Time and Again," and there's no mention of forbidden knowledge there either), he merely says that creation demands moral responsibility, and then sketches a situation where there is no moral responsibility, yet guilt.

The scientists are trying to create life and are very guilty about it, quite neurotic. They try to cure their neurosis by participating in the Play. When acting out--or rather: projecting--the Play they let every moral inhibition go out through the window, and create the weirdest set of characters imaginable. It then appears that it was when projecting their characters that they really ought to have retained their morals--because the characters come to life. The situation is ironically reversed.

There is no implicit moral at all in the story of the kind you mention, there is instead the quiet chuckle of fate, another example of Simak's masterly irony.

Read it again and reverse your opinion...

venerable greetings,
Bertil Martensson

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A re-reading of story and criticism (RQ II, p.124) leaves my views unchanged. Attitudes of fictional characters are not necessarily those of the author; but the haunted conscience of Mr. Simak's scientists is so contrary to what would be--and what is--experienced by actual scientists in such a situation that no other interpretation seems plausible.

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1219 Union St.
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11225

Dear Leland,

...I must take exception to Mr. Neville's...remarks (RQ II, p.215) about the uses of LSD. It is indeed a true and unarguable fact that acid helps one feel a closer kinship with the universe. Why Mr. Neville feels this should conflict with anyone else's view of reality is a puzzle.

Nor can I see what it is that he fears from the psychedelic community...There are other groups who are really to be feared, after all. It's not acid heads, I'm reasonably certain, who are loosing Napalm on oriental rice farmers, or running around New Jersey clad in white sheets.

Sincerely
David Papayanopoulos

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Harm is wrought by muddle-headed ideas through the agency of men--as with KKK activities justified by the notion of White Superiority and other paranoid activities (cf. RQ I, 23 and the section, "Some Less Pleasant Topics" in this issue) justified via mystical unification.

=====

501 Sylvan Drive
Garland, Texas 75040

Dear Leland,

I have now read the whole of RQ#7, and it fulfills the expectations aroused by the skeleton pages.

Panshin's "Heinlein in Dimension" was what sold me from the first, and I still find it the best thing in the issue. I don't agree with everything he says, but I do find it consistently interesting...

By contrast the "Critique" of White's The Once and Future King could have been profitably replaced by four blank pages. A better title would have been "A Synopsis of T.H. White's etc." A plot summary of this work is even less useful or interesting than in certain other cases. Does any RQ reader need to be told more of the plot than that it is based on Arthurian legend? More attention should have been given to how White varies parts of the basic legend and to his mood setting. I read TOAFK over ten years ago when I was just barely a teenager, but I can still remember the gradual shift of mood from Disney-like lightness to the dark gloom of the final part.

Your own article starts in mid stream a good deal less well than does Panshin's. I am really not quite sure where you started or where you are going. Perhaps if I were more familiar or more interested in the old Tremaine Astounding...

.....

I've been thinking some more about Panshin's Heinlein article, and while I accept his statement that RAH is not a visual writer, I wonder if he could not have picked a better example than the Colt 45 from Beyond This Horizon. This is sort of stacking the cards. After all, Heinlein is not writing here of some unfamiliar future device but one with which his twentieth century readers would probably be familiar. (Especially those in military service; the 45 automatic had been in use by the US Army for thirty years when the story was written.) A thorough description of this weapon would have been equivalent to telling us that the hero had five toes on each foot. More to the point would be RAH's description of the contemporary hand weapons.

Yours,
Carrington B. Dixon, Jr.

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(The above constitutes two letters, separated spatially by a dotted line and temporally by two weeks.) To be fair I must point out that White's change of mood was indicated, although not analysed, in the earlier instalments.

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R.R. #1, Box 167
Fremont, Indiana 46737

Dear Leland:

...Philip Dick just doesn't reach me like he does you and Kris Neville. He gives that impression which Ballard gives much stronger of telling a joke where I missed the point. Not a comfortable feeling...

I think you and Lee Carson are arguing over nothing. There are not "economic facts" in the same sense that there are facts in physics or chemistry. A law can be tested in the sciences by narrowing the experiment down to one variable, which is something that cannot be done in economics (or psychology or sociology, for that matter). However "valid generalizations" can be made that can predict economic events. This is by no means as easy or as certain as...in the scientific fields. ...Economics is a very complex field where a multitude of variables have to be contended with. If the Henry George School tried to present a simple cut-and-dried set of theories to me, I wouldn't hesitate in calling them crackpots.

I am definitely looking forward to the Reece Morehead article on cyborgs. If I could plug a computer into my head, it would...simplify my college work in engineering...And the possibilities do not stop there. There have been sf...heroes with all kinds of built-ins, the one I remember best being Gully Foyle in The Stars My Destination.

Yours,

Rick Brooks

Phil Dick (like J.G. Ballard) communicates mental states rather than scientifically plausible external events, so anybody who anticipates only the latter will experience confusion and the feeling that he doesn't "get it."// A predecessor of Henry George would have lived too early to assess results of the Industrial Revolution, while a later economist might have framed the theory in mathematical terms incomprehensible to purely literary minds. Since Henry George taught what he did when he did, he is a necessary topic for study (even by those who deny the existence of economic "facts") because of his impact on such post-Victorian writers as G.B.Shaw and M.P. Shiel.

3705 General Stilwell NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87111

Dear Leland:

...one thing continues to bother me--your editorials. Why support negative causes like not buying Ultimate publications? I think you made your point against literary "theft" in RQ #6 sufficiently clear, making the entire RQ #7 editorial entirely superfluous. Anyone that wasn't convinced by the first most assuredly would not be persuaded by the second. Your one-man vendetta against Ultimate could not possibly be effective to the extent that it would force Ultimate into doing anything it didn't want to do, so why not channel your energies into more profitable and productive (instead of destructive) areas? Besides, these last two editorials sound a bit too much like JW Campbell on the FDA.

I wouldn't want to put words into Mr. Carson's mouth, but it seems to me that he meant that economics is not like the physical sciences. Values change from period to period and are therefore relative--and not absolute facts as you suggested. If Mr. Carson tried to re-purchase Manhattan Island for \$24 worth of glass beads he's probably be locked up in the funny farm. If he tried to buy anything with \$24 worth of glass beads he'd be locked up. The value of glass beads has declined somewhat, wouldn't you say? Besides this, Peter Minuit was a speculator and the value of the land might never have increased. Facts about economics? The only fact that I can think of is "Buyer beware"--the same Indians sold Manhattan Island at least seven times to different groups of colonists--a forerunner to the offer, "Wanta buy the Brooklyn Bridge, cheap?"

Adios,
Bob Vardeman

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Positive action is easy: with cash saved by not buying Amazing Stories the reader can buy Mike Moorcock's New Worlds, the most exciting s.f. magazine now published; if there is extra cash he can buy Bob Lowndes' Famous Science Fiction (50¢ per copy; Dept. 15, 119 5th Ave, New York 10003).//

In physical sciences the economic analogy is not to classical Newtonian Analysis but to Statistical Mechanics, which studies aggregates instead of separate individuals. At present, of course, we know less about economics than physics; so group behavior of people is less predictable than group behavior of gas molecules.

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Box 43 Hudson Heights Station
North Bergen, New Jersey 07048

Dear Leland:

Found your publication damned stimulating...You're controversial and aren't afraid to make what you'd consider to be an intelligent, honest opinion. Also...your mag, while at times tending to be slightly ponderous, isn't trite and pseudo-intellectual, as a lot of "serious" efforts tended to be out of fadom in the past.

Will take you to task, though, on your "Theft From..." article, which starts on p. 149, Vol.2...

...Concerning what collectors pay--no one twists a fanatic's arm when he/she desires to pay some exorbitant price for something. I agree that anyone putting out huge sums of money is setting a godawful precedent (it makes it tougher on less affluent collectors, for one, and also puts ...smaller dealers at a disadvantage when they deal with collectors who overprice their goodies). But you'll find this sort of thing...in all areas of antiquarian wheeling-dealing, i.e., furniture, books, sags, vases, paintings, etc. The dealer puts himself in this position: I'm here; I've got the goods; I know you want what I've got; I've made a basic investment, and I wish to make a profit...There are tremendous ups and downs in any business, and SFantasy dealers had a really horrible recession for years; hey should be entitled, I think, to make up for "lost time," and if they can, now that old pulp mags and books are "in" gain, why not? I think it should be up to the collector--more than anyone--to shop around a little if he wishes to save money.

Sol Cohen's manner in running his business may be immoral, but...it doesn't constitute "theft." In fact, I don't even think the word "immoral" should be used...The mag business today is one helluva close shave--never before...has it been so terribly difficult for a smaller publisher to earn a profit (I should know after 8 years...)...and often the difference between what a publisher can save on editorial matter can mean whether or not he's made a profit on each issue...Some publishers ...are only breaking even; some...lose a little or much money per issue, but continue to publish merely for "appearances" sake or because they hope they'll get out a sales rut soon, or simply because they've got a profitable mag going to support a loser (it's a matter of a publisher baving as many titles as...possible under his colophon to insure more bargaining power with distributors and advertisers). The thing is: consumer magazine publishing is a business--probably one of the toughest and least remunerative considering the investment; sometimes publishers have to do things...unpopular, but nevertheless done merely for the sake of expedience and survival.

With best wishes,

Calvin T. Beck

That the collector is a partner in the crime makes the dealer no less guilty. And the existence of book dealers who sell at fair prices shows that theft, while sometimes convenient, is not necessary.// Although publishers encounter bad times, the s.f. writer encounters still worse. Note, e.g., how prices of s.f. magazines have doubled since 1950, whereas word rates to authors have stayed the same or (in one case) decreased.

2033 N. Vista del Mar
Hollywood, Calif. 90028

Dear Leland:

Why the hell are your comments on racial bias in the old Clayton Astounding "unprinted because unprintable"? I should have...imagined you far too sophisticated to join those dedicated to not..."spreading the evil, slanderous doctrine"--like those pious pterodactyls of the NAACP rooting out copies of Twain's Huckleberry Finn from various libraries because the word "Nigger" appears therein (presumably spotting THE WORD the reader will unearth a pallid Merlin-type headgear from out his closet, rush down to his friendly neighborhood White Sale, and thence outfitted in sheet, set out to fire the symbol of a lately deceased deity on his unfriendly neighborhood lawn). I should have put all this down to some technical facet of copyright or availability of Clayton material for adequate research except for your...comments re the penny-pinching zymurgy of one Sol Cohen...Paul Krassner (of The Realist) was humorously "interviewed" recently on KPFK-FM in Hollywood. When he quietly observed that he wasn't a "Jew" because he was ...an atheist, he became the recipient...of numerous phone calls attesting to a kind of...mordant zealotry to out-sting the WASP's in furthering a favorable public image. When he pointed out that being "Jewish" (as being WASPish) was contingent on accepting certain theological dogma and that, accurately, the best you could say is that certain persons are of Semitic origin, he said it all.

...May I suggest...that "prejudice being what it is" it is indeed prejudicial to assume that RQ readers (the Goyen at least) may find it difficult to distinguish between Leland Lapiro and a somewhat disreputable publisher.

Incidentally, I hope you won't take Silverberg's advice and turn from the 1935-ish pulp s-f. For reasons not connected with Sam Moskowitz's campaign, or opinions, I think some considerable portion of the older stuff to be of more interest than much of today's. Donald Wandrei was considerably more talented as a writer than either you or Silverberg indicate, I believe. See Arkham House's Strange Harvest, which I was prepared to present and laugh at (alternately) as dated pulp crud published chiefly because of personal ties between the author and Derleth. Much of the contents is considerably superior to what I'd anticipated and holds up better than I'd imagined; more here than the dross of Depression daydreaming. (I should mention that--by chance--I'd read only one Wandrei story in its original pulp incarceration.)

Best Wishes

Paul Kalin

Jewishness is determined by membership in an ethnic group, not by adherence to theological dogma. Because of my own mystic identification with this group I feel ennobled by the achievements of an S.Y. Agnon or a Leonard Bernstein and degraded by the practices of a Sol Cohen.// Racial bias in the Clayton Astounding was discussed in an article scheduled for serialisation in the old Rhodomagnetic Digest. But the editors deleted from instalment Two an entire page that contained a crude anti-Mexican quotation and after the third instalment discontinued the article altogether--presumably because they believed (rightly) that it quoted other equally offensive examples.

423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Dear Leland:

The survey of Russian science fiction in this new Riverside Quarterly was the best I've seen of several recent goes at the topic. Just one thing disturbs me, however...that some of the apparent failings of Russian science fiction really should be ascribed to the intended audience. That is, it's awfully hard to be sure at a distance of another mother tongue that you're reading a novel intended for adults. There was the famous case of a professional science fiction editor who spent some money to pay for translations of French science fiction, found the results too routine and elementary to be published, and learned only a decade later from a French fan that his translator had gone to work on boys' books. I own a copy of the original Russian edition of Andromeda, whose contents page indicates that it was intended for a youthful audience. I might point out that it is not difficult to obtain copies of these Russian books. They are distributed in the U.S. through Four Continent Book Comp., 156 Fifth Ave., New York 10010, which does mail order business and publishes lists. However, a reading knowledge of Russian is necessary even if you want the books only...as conversation pieces, because the titles and descriptive matter in the catalogs are in Russian. The latest catalog...has nothing mentioned in Milch's article, probably because the titles cited are not old enough to be classics nor new enough to be in the current listings. A 1966 novel by Belayev is listed, but it contains a specific statement that it is "realist."

The solution to shoddy practices by professional editors might conceivably lie in Washington. The SFMA might investigate the possibility of lobbying or trying to activate whatever regulatory machinery that may exist to cover situations like the mostly reprint magazines. I remember clearly that some Washington agency...decreed during World War Two that reprints in magazines must be identified as such in large type; my memory is less clear on the cause of this decree, but I think it was Hornig's Future Fiction and Science Fiction. There might be two approaches to the problem. One would be an effort to obtain a Post Office Department ruling that it is fraudulent to distribute through the mails reprint materials that are not clearly identified as such. This would cover not only the Cohen magazines but the nasty practice of paperback publishers who put a new title and new cover illustration on an old book when it's ready to go into a new printing...

Panshin verbalized a lot of things that I'd been trying to say to myself about Heinlein's handling of sex. It's quite possible that his inability to write well on this topic could explain his specialization in science fiction...One minor matter about Farnham's Freehold: I found it...impossible to remember which was the daughter and which was her friend, because they talked, thought, acted, and even conceived so similarly. Heinlein had no difficulty in differentiating among the men in that particular novel. But women give him trouble in general, and his memorable female characters are extremely young ones.

Jim Harmon wrote about an activity entirely alien to my experience. I had thought that the market for sub-B movies (like the westerns with all-Negro casts shown only in theaters in Negro sections) had disappeared totally by now. It will be interesting to see what happens when the low-priced video taperecorders begin to reach the people who have been attempting to make underground movies. These devices could be the great equalizers in the field, eliminating lab costs, requiring less elaborate lighting setups, and leaving no telltale evidence, since a moment with a bulkeraser can wipe out the evidence if someone complains about obscenity or non-union labor use...

"The Mystic Renaissance" continues to be very impressive. I must admit, however, that you are arousing so much long-dormant nostalgia that I find it hard to write critically about your contentions. Those were stories that taught me to love science fiction, inferior though they be in some respects. Rebirth haunted me for at least ten years...

"The Other Way" was...the best of the fiction. It has all the virtues whose absence I lamented in the letter column in reference to another story...

Yrs., &c.,

Harry Warner, Jr.

Appended herewith are some comments, by Franz Rottensteiner, which came too late for inclusion as a separate letter: "Alexei Belayev is not exactly a writer of current Soviet sf: he died in 1942. A better anthology [than the Collier pbs], Destination Amaltheia, is also available in English translation, as is Belayev's novel The Amphibian and Yefremov's Andromeda. I think that the best of the new Russian writers is Dneprov, who has written some very fine robot stories..."

APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA

I request indulgence from those old RQ subscribers who grow weary of reiterated protests about theft. True, readers convinced by early editorials need no further reminders, while those initially unconvinced generally remain so. However it must be remembered that RQ is constantly acquiring new readers (about 50 per issue), most of whom know nothing about Sol Cohen and his Ultimate Publishing Co., and these are the people who must be informed

THEFT: LEGAL AND OTHERWISE

In RQ #6 there was cited a complaint by Harl Vincent about lack of proof-reading in the Tower Books edition of his Doomsday Planet. In another letter this author also remarked that Tower's cover illustration resembled nothing in his story--and Bruce Robbins tells the reason for such non-resemblance: the Tower cover is identical to an earlier one used by a British firm for another book, Richard Marsh's The Beetle (Consul 1378, 3/6).

There have been several recent opinions that despite its legalized theft Amazing Stories (with Fantastic) should be kept alive, the reasons being: (a) Amazing is the first and oldest s.f. magazine, and its long tradition shouldn't be broken, (b) s.f. writers need the sales outlet provided by Amazing's purchase of one new story per issue, (c) Amazing is not alone, since other s.f. magazines also have reprints.

Argument (a)--that what has been must therefore continue to be --I find incomprehensible; (b) is answered (as before) by noting that payment of one author does not justify theft from a half-dozen others. By reprinting an author's old stories, which appear simultaneously with his new stories in other magazines, Amazing actually reduces the paying market--since the paying magazines (and their authors) make less money when obliged to compete under such conditions. Finally, there is no equivalence between "Amazing" and legitimate reprint magazines like Robert Lowndes' Famous Science Fiction. Lowndes searches for authors he wishes to reprint and pays them voluntarily; Sol Cohen was searched for (by authors whose stories had been used without their permission), and consented to pay only after talks with the SFWA.

TALES OF HORROR

Recently I was sent, by a one-time wearer of the Jim Clark "Never" button, a cheque, which I returned with an explanation that RQ accepts no subscriptions from those engaged in racist activities. The money was sent me a second time, accompanied by a note which stated that the button-wearing was due not to racial prejudice, but a desire to "bait" a certain (white) New York fan. It stated, further, that an uncashed cheque would confuse the sender's accounts; so if it were not applied to the RQ, it should be donated to an Eskimo or Indian relief organisation. I wrote back that the money would be given to the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). The response to this note is instructive: "Dear Mr. Sapiro...turning it over to C.O.R.E. would constitute misappropriation of funds and mail fraud...if you engage in the ...action outlined in your letter...I shall be forced to take actions which would involve not only the Canadian and American postoffice departments, but also the reputation of...RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY... (signed) Fred Lerner." To save my correspondent unnecessary trouble I have sent copies of the entire proceedings to officials of Her Majesty's postal service and to the office of the United States Postmaster General.

THE CHILLY EQUATIONS

"Crew members and passengers, the emergency meeting is now in session! As you've been told, the evasive action taken by our ship to avoid the sudden meteor shower from star-sector E46 has left us extremely short of fuel. The dumping of expendable cargo has been insufficient.

"None of us will reach the planet Xanthus alive unless somebody takes a one-way walk into space!

"I've gone over the whole list. Obviously, pilots and mechanics must be spared. And once we land, the agronomists, biologists, chemists, and other scientific personnel will be needed.

"You there, Dudley, are the only person without mechanical or scientific training. You were put aboard because your uncle, the Space Commissioner, wanted to get rid of you. While on this ship you have spent your time drinking beer and reading Playboy."

"Captain Waddlington, your head must be filled with helium. I'm the only one on board who has taken classes from the Henry George School! I alone know how application of sound economic principles can prevent slums, labour strife, and business depressions. Without me, your silly little community will be just another Hoboken. So hands up, Waddlington, you're taking the space-walk!"

"You'll never get away with it, Dudley!"

"No? While you were supervising repairs on the fuel line I threw out the air-lock all the hand-weapons except mine. So goodbye, Captain!"

Some day you too may be in a position where your knowledge of political-economic problems will save you from great embarrassment. If you wish to investigate the problems of urban blight, rural decay, and business cycles in classes recommended by 200,000 former students, just contact:

Henry George School of Social Science
50 East 69th St.
New York, N.Y. 10021.

The School has classes in every major U.S. city--also in Canada, Australia, England, Scotland, Denmark, Puerto Rico, Columbia, and Kenya. Correspondence courses also are given.

So consult your local phone book or write to the International Headquarters in New York, at the address listed above. Whether on Xanthus or Earth, you'll find it useful to keep up with current political and economic problems!

new worlds

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